SNOWBIRDS: Flap in Florida • **FINANCE:** Tempest at Altamira

CANADA'S WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE

Maclean's

FEBRUARY 10 1997

ARE YOUR KIDS SAFE?

From hockey to schools to scouting, the hunt is on for sexual predators



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Maclean's CANADA'S WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE

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Are your kids safe?
When adults in authority sexually abuse children in their care, the system is failing. In the wake of the Graham James scandal, youth-oriented groups from organized sports to Scouts Canada are having to rethink their policies for screening the people who work for them



PETER BREGG/MACLEAN'S

Features



TONY BUBBENDORF

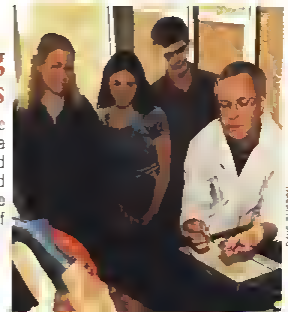
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Flap in Florida
Thousands of sun seeking Canadian "snowbirds" gathered in Florida to schmooze and grouse a bit about medical coverage, flags—and the locals



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The tempest at Altamira
Canada's best-known mutual-fund manager, Frank Mersch, is at the vortex of a takeover battle for Altamira Management Ltd

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Measuring young minds
A nationwide science test puts Alberta students at the head of the class—and reignites a heated debate over the merits of standardized testing



DAVE BUSTON

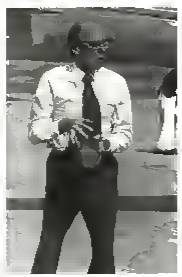
From The Editor

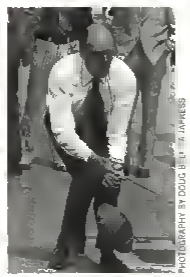
Electioneering TV-style



It is difficult to blame the poor old CBC for making plans to cut down on the expense of covering election campaigns. The cost of keeping crews on five leaders' planes could approach $500,000. Little wonder that the embattled CBC, beset by budget slashers on all fronts, has tentatively agreed with three other networks to pool coverage on each campaign. Other news organizations may also forsake the hermetically sealed flying machines for the same reasons. And the CBC has carried innovation a step further, proposing that the leaders campaign by dropping into a Newsworld studio each day to deliver their message directly to the electorate.

The apparent twilight of the full-fledged election entourage, with its squads of impatiently impertinent journalistic hacks and phalanxes of smooth-talking political flacks, is a matter of nostalgia and regret. Gone may be the era when the train, the bus and the plane generated the lore that shaped stories and reputations. In the 1974 campaign, for example, Tory leader Robert Stanfield suffered a fatal blow to his image when a photo by Doug Ball of The Canadian Press showing the leader dropping a football flashed across the country. It became a defining moment in Stanfield's last bid to unseat Pierre Elliott Trudeau. Stanfield actually caught more footballs than he dropped in games of catch with reporters. It mattered not a whit that CP also moved pictures of Stanfield catching the ball; the shot of the bobble was *the* political photo of the year, reflecting the media's perception of Stanfield's awkwardness compared with Trudeau's grace.





PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUG BALL, THE CANADIAN PRESS

Stanfield: catching more balls than he dropped

Campaign planes often were a time for informal exchanges. In the 1979 campaign, as the Conservative campaign jet flew out of Quebec City, leader Joe Clark strode to the back in a yellow cardigan and, espying veteran reporter Val Sears of *The Toronto Star*, inquired innocently: "Mr. Sears, how long are you with us?" Without skipping a beat, the acerbic Sears looked up from his seat and replied: "As long as it takes, sir."

Trudeau was never as approachable. Periodically, he would succumb to the entreaties of his communications advisers and invite a reporter or two to break bread with him in his forward cabin. During one such repast in the 1979 campaign, Trudeau mused that he might indeed try to govern even if he did not win a plurality of seats in the Commons. Reporters Mary Janigan and Mark Phillips sprinted to the airport telephones upon landing with the scoop of the campaign.

For sheer hubris, however, nothing quite matches the idea that bringing the leaders into a studio daily somehow will be less artificial than stumping the highways and byways of the land. Besides, the campaign planes will have to fly, if only to feed the local angles to media in the regions—and play us off against each other—and to rally the troops on the ground at nightly rallies. The old traditions will probably continue, with or without the battalions of airborne flacks and hacks.

Robert Lewis

Newsroom Notes:



Came: unsettling

A 'parent's nightmare'

The Graham James sexual abuse case not only rocked organized hockey and other sports and volunteer associations, it also profoundly disturbed parents whose youngsters are active in school and community activities. One of those parents was *Maclean's* Senior Writer Barry Came. "I've got a pair of teenagers myself and they're both heavily into organized sports," Came observed. "It's every parent's nightmare."

Came was called on to write the main story in this week's cover package on protecting children from sexual predators. To explore this issue, which is all too often relegated to the shadows, the magazine assembled a nationwide team of writers, reporters and researchers. Came, in Toronto, drew upon reports filed by Bureau Chief Chris Wood and Correspondent Scott Steele in Vancouver, Halifax Bureau Chief Brian Bergman and Atlantic reporter Susanne Hiller, Ottawa Correspondent Luke Fisher and Toronto-based Assistant Editor Sharon Doyle Driedger. Driedger also delved into the worried world of volunteer coaches. Montreal Bureau Chief Brenda Branswell looked at child abuse through a victim's eyes, while Prairie Correspondent Dale Eisler wrote a cautionary tale by revisiting the town of Martensville, Sask., scene of a notorious sex-abuse case that backfired on the prosecution. Assistant Managing Editor Ann Dowsett Johnston organized and directed the project.



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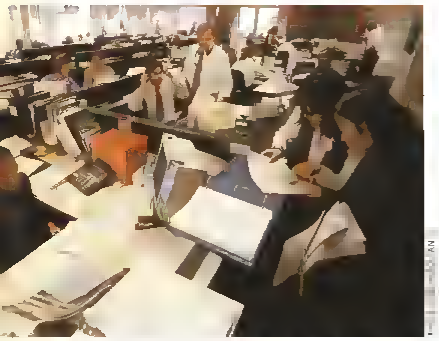
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The Mail



Selling mutual funds in Toronto questions about fees

Mutual fund expenses

The cover story on mutual funds was most welcome and informative except for one complaint ("The best and worst mutual funds," Jan. 27). Returns, risks and expenses are three important considerations in any long-term investment decision. Your fund rankings included the first two but failed to note the last, the expenses. Over a long term investment horizon, both the initial load fee and the annual management expense ratio can have a significant effect on returns. The related issues of why annual expense ratios for Canadian mutual funds are almost twice those in the United States, and why there is no low-cost index fund in Canada comparable to the Vanguard 500 index fund in the United States, which charges about .2 per cent per year, were also not addressed in your story. Excessive annual management fees are a drain on investor returns. If they could be reduced by one percentage point per year, it would put another $2 billion in investor pockets every year. Over a 25-year investment horizon, this approximates $50 billion, and now we are talking about real money.

George Luste, Toronto

Where did all the tin men go? They became financial planners.

Lionel Perry, Tobermory, Ont.

Your special issue on mutual funds is full of dire warnings about the lack of knowledge of the investor. A quick look through the ads will show part of the reason. They tell people not to worry, to plan for vacations, to make money without leaving home, to sleep while their RRSP works, that there are better things to do than worry about money. The industry, I think, would prefer a sleepy public. Maybe that would forestall prickly questions about management fees, front-end loads and residual fees paid to investment brokers.

Bill Feeney, Waterloo, Ont. ▣

Somalia coverup?

It is clear that a three-way conflict of interest is occurring with the department of national defence. The reluctance of Defence Minister Doug Young, his predecessor David Collenette as well as Justice Minister Allan Rock to hand over the needed documents has been a fundamental reason for the lengthy inquiry. In addition to this, the Jan. 10 decision to change the deadline from Dec. 31, 1997, to March 31, 1997, was an absolute breach of ethical political administration, especially when the defence department in under investigation by the inquiry ("Pulling the plug," Canada, Jan. 27). Soldiers who depended on this inquiry to clear their names will no longer have this opportunity and, conversely, others higher up will be rewarded for a coverup that will not be uncovered. Why would Young claim that this deadline would suffice when he knew that vital evidence would not be heard? Is the Liberal government orchestrating a coverup?

David Hill, Moosomin, Sask.

Defence Minister Doug Young is to be congratulated for trying to put an end to the Somalia inquiry. As an ordinary taxpayer, I was very pleased to see him take this action, as far too much of our taxes has been spent on the high-priced commissioners and the gaggle of lawyers, senior military officials and all their support staff. Surely it should not take nearly four years and millions of dollars to investigate and report on this sad event that occurred in March of 1993.

J. H. Bailey, Surrey, B.C.

Our military critics have got the object of their scorn and condemnation into such a state that it doesn't know whether to fish or cut bait. If the critics expect our soldiers to behave like they were having tea with their Auntie Rose in situations that are uncomfortable, frustrating, as well as downright dangerous, perhaps the entire peacekeeping concept should be abandoned. There are always some bad apples in all sectors of society and they have to be dealt with, but it should not cost $30 million to do it, even if it does provide jobs, jobs, jobs. The military in all of history has had an understandable aversion to sharing its records with the media, which have to satisfy a need to make their publications more exciting. We need a sense of responsibility here, not a knee-jerk reaction to publish whatever comes to light.

Peter Dobbing, Nepean, Ont.

One in a million

Out here in Regina, our hospitals do not have one MRI machine, a state-of-the-art system for peering inside the human body. Our citizens have to travel 600 km for this service, while our hard-working physicians endure constant frustration awaiting results. The cost of supplying this very basic component of health care, we are told, is too much—about $1 million. Meanwhile, in Ottawa, our ex-prime minister, still smarting from public knowledge of his excesses as reported in a best-selling book, is concerned with reassembling his reputation ("Brian Mulroney's revenge," Cover, Jan. 20). Our present one, hoping to finally humiliate his old rival, bungles the job. The cost of financing this political squabble, we are told, is negligible: about $1 million. Just don't push us too far, Ottawa.

Joe Turnham, Regina

American content

The possibility of Canada being forced to allow split runs of American magazines at a devastating cost to Canadian publications is getting close to the last straw ("A blow to magazines," Media, Jan. 27). American publications want to sell their product (advertising space) in Canada at below cost.

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THE MAIL

If this isn't a form of dumping, what is? If this is foisted on the Canadian people, surely we can do two things: not buy the product itself and not buy from those who advertise in that product.

Donald M. Jackson,
Goderich, Ont.

No one should be surprised that the American media giants will not be satisfied until they have won the final victory. But just as in 1812, they have taken us for an easy mark. As a result of the turbot wars, I simply refuse to purchase any item from Spain. Surely if enough of us did the same to their magazines, the Americans might repeat history, give up and go back across the border where they belong. With 1,300 Canadian periodicals to choose from, why read about America anyway?

Richard Legault,
Val Therese, Ont.

It is because Peter C. Newman believes Canadian culture must be protected by legislation that he foists his myopic lack of confidence in Canadians on readers with his musings in "The Canadian dream loses a big round" (The Nation's Business, Jan. 27). Woe on us if we are such mollusks that reading American magazines "blunts our intuition" and "makes us forget who we are." Newman should realize that the quality and scholarship of Canadian magazines will bring success against any cultural attacks from any foreign-type media. Canadians are smarter than Newman and the Liberal government give us credit for.

Macey Morris
Richmond, B.C.

Yukon gold

It is difficult to understand why a project that is good for both the Yukon and Canada has to be presented in such a negative manner ("Yukon alchemy," Business, Dec. 30/Jan. 6). Why couldn't the article have pointed out the positive facts about the Brewery Creek mine, as well as some of the concerns? Every aspect of the plant was designed according to the strictest of guidelines worked out by personnel from the company, local, territorial and federal governments. The pad and pond design requirements are the most comprehensive in North America. The millions spent so far have been a significant boost to the Dawson City and Yukon economies. During operations, as many as 130 people will be employed at the mine and the total payroll will be in excess of $5 million, most of which will go into the Yukon economy. To state simply that "cyanide solution, if accidentally released into the local water supply, could cause serious environmental damage" is merely a sensational statement that may create anxiety without cause. Every gold operation in Canada, and there are many, uses cyanide. It is a chemical that has many positive uses if

The Road Ahead

'Limit politicians to one term'

As one who spent 12 years as an MLA, served as Speaker of the house in the Northwest Territories legislature and ran for Parliament, I have thought a lot about how to improve our political structures both provincially and federally in Canada. Here are my suggestions.

First, politicians should be limited to a single term in office. The result would be that, rather than doing almost everything with a view to re-election, politicians would act mainly in the public interest, principally doing what they know to be right and just. Another benefit would be that pensions would become unnecessary. The professional politician would become a thing of the past. Instead, our best and brightest could be encouraged to serve because their commitment would be to a single defined term. Employers would give good people leaves of absence to serve the public interest, returning public service to the lofty height it deserves.

With the elimination of pension costs, politicians could be better paid, thereby attracting more capable people. A fixed single term would make it easier for good people and their employers to plan. Strict rules governing conflict of interest would have to apply between the politicians and their past—and future—employers so that no favors could be sought or received while the employee is working as a public representative. Upon completion of public service, the politician could return to the same job, or an equivalent position.

The term of an elected member would have to be extended from the current norm of roughly four years to a fixed term of five or six years. That would provide sufficient time for a government to consider, design, implement and evaluate initiatives. But it would also require politicians to move decisively and with a sense of urgency. The role of the elected member would be strengthened because parties would not be in a position to threaten to withdraw their support for re-election from critical members. Votes free of party discipline could become commonplace rather than the exception.

Those fundamental changes would encourage action to be taken simply because it is right and just. The only reward would be the gratitude of one's constituents for a job well done. And isn't that what "service" is all about?

The Road Ahead invites readers to advance specific solutions to Canada's political, social and economic problems. Unpublished submissions may run condensed as regular letters or appear on an electronic bulletin board.

David H. Searle,
Vancouver

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Healthy Bites

Breakfast and intellectual development

According to the latest figures, more Americans, especially adolescents and young adults, are skipping breakfast. This has the American Dietetic Association predicting grave implications for the intellectual development of American youth. Recent studies show that not eating breakfast makes children less efficient in problem solving, less able to recall and use new information, and less verbally fluent. Individuals who eat breakfast are also more likely to be deficient in vitamins A and D, calcium, iron and zinc, and have more problems controlling their weight.



Milk products like cheese, yogourt and the milk you pour over your morning cereal are the richest source of the calcium human bodies absorb best

Elite would eat better in soup kitchens!

Being thin is so crucial to the rich and famous, it's been quipped that the homeless are better nourished. Beyond this irony, however, is a looming health tragedy. Whatever one's economic situation, insufficient calories and poor eating habits lead to poor nutrition and disease.

Eliminate 50% of disease?

Consider the social and medicare-cost benefits of reducing the incidence of a major disease by 50%, easily and inexpensively.

The disease is osteoporosis, a degenerative condition affecting the skeleton. It strikes 1 in 4 Canadian women over age 50, as well as 1 in 8 men, and is estimated to cost the healthcare system close to $1 billion, annually. Yet according to Dr. Robert Heaney, renowned specialist in osteoporosis, if individuals could be assured of sufficient calcium and vitamin D, as much as half the osteoporosis burden of developed nations, such as Canada, would be eliminated. Genetic inheritance and lifestyle factors, such as smoking and physical inactivity account for the remaining 50%.

From the Dairy Bureau of Canada

Where "creamy rich" doesn't mean more fat



Rich, creamy, velvety – all words that describe your favourite fine cheeses like Brie, Camembert and Blue. But, good news! Their wonderful taste and texture is the result of a higher moisture content, or differences in the method of production and ripening, not, as many think, a higher fat content. On average, fine Canadian cheeses have just about the same fat per serving as firm cheeses like Swiss, Mozzarella or Gouda – as well as lots of calcium, protein and other essential nutrients.

Vitamin AAAAAAAA!



THE MAIL

handled correctly. Comparing Brewery Creek to the Summitville mine in Colorado where a leak occurred is unfair. The physical situations are completely different and the construction was carried out to very different standards, making these two projects dissimilar in a number of ways. Lastly, heap leaching is already being carried out in very cold climates in the Dakotas and Montana with very successful results.

Paul F. Saxton
President and chief operating officer
Viceroy Resource Corp.
Vancouver

Not snow, nor rain

The statement that B.C. Ferries cancelled service to and from the mainland" the day after the "storm of the century" hit British Columbia is not correct ("Slip sliding away," Canada, Jan. 13). We were unable to supply ferry service from Swartz Bay to Vancouver and the Gulf Islands, but ferries from Nanaimo to the lower mainland operated all day thanks to the efforts of a number of staff who, in some cases, walked several kilometres through deep snow to get to work.

Mike Carter
Senior vice-president, operations and customer service,
British Columbia Ferry Corporation,
Victoria

Russian refugees

I read with open-mouthed disbelief your story about Russian Jews leaving Israel and applying for refugee status in Canada ("Fleeing the promised land," World, Jan. 13). As a Canadian who emigrated to Israel from Montreal, I can attest to the patent falseness and cynicism of the claims of these "refugees." As a medical professional, I am familiar with the generous basket of services that an immigrant from the Soviet Union receives on arrival here. What is unbelievable in this tale is the naïveté of some Canadian government officials who buy this story.

Dr. A. Mark Clarfield,
Jerusalem

A country classic

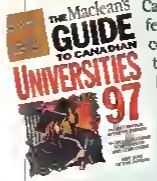
It was with sadness that I read about the death of Wilf Carter (Passages, Dec. 16, 1996). To a Prairie boy weaned on Wilf's 78-r.p.m. recordings in the 1950s, "Montana Slim" is truly a legend of legends. He was still belting out country classics to sold-out audiences in small-town Alberta arenas as late as the mid-1980s.

Murray C. Laft
La Paz, Bolivia

Maclean's
WHAT MATTERS TO CANADIANS

EDITORIAL UPDATE

The Maclean's Guide to Universities



The definitive guide to Canadian universities features comprehensive, colorful profiles of more than 50 universities, the Maclean's university rankings and Campus Confidential, where students tell us what makes their schools tick—and what ticks them off. It features a guide to the hottest hangouts, the most popular profs, and the latest scoop on What's Hot and What's Not, and What's New. Also included is a Financial Planner and the Career File—where students can pick up pointers on how to prepare for a changing job market.

NEW FOR '97

This year's guide introduces two new features:

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- The most popular universities—and what they charge
- Essential internet and mailing addresses

Community College Directory
- Thumbnail sketches and academic strengths of more than 170 community colleges and Quebec CEGEPs

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Backstage



Anthony Wilson-Smith

A memo to the Prime Minister

Memo to: Prime Minister Jean Chrétien
From: Conventional Wisdom Caucus, Liberal Party of Canada
Re: Election plans and timing
Dear Prime Minister:

You, like us, are painfully aware of the recent controversies and our falling popularity ratings in the polls. That leads to speculation that you will not call an election until this fall—at the earliest. We know you are cautious by nature, and have not forgotten that you alone among senior members of the Liberal caucus in 1984 cautioned the new prime minister, John Turner, not to call an election too early. Although his supporters scorned your advice, you were right.

But we respectfully suggest that the new session of the House of Commons, which begins this week, will be nasty and brutish—and should also be short. There are many compelling reasons to hold an election soon, and few good reasons to delay. Here are some points reflecting the thinking of many members of caucus.

1. We now have an issue upon which to base the campaign, thanks to the provinces. Last week, the premiers and territorial leaders issued a document on medicare that is so mealy-mouthed that it makes a mockery of the beloved concept of universal access to comprehensive health care. Instead, the document promises only to ensure that Canadians "have reasonable access to an appropriate and effective range of health benefits"—and does not even specify what that means. This, at a time when the status quo is valued so highly that polls indicate a majority of Canadians would pay higher taxes if needed to preserve the principle of universal access. Now, Liberals can campaign as staunch defenders of that right (and hope no one recalls that our cuts in transfer payments to the provinces have severely diminished our moral authority to enforce the present terms of the Canada Health Act).

Moreover, the issue is in keeping with existing plans to campaign as "the only major national party that believes in the ability of government to do good."

2. In politics, time heals some wounds, and creates others. The decision to cancel contracts relating to the privatization of Pearson airport in 1993 caused short-term gain but long-term pain. When a settlement is finally reached in or out of court, the government may end up paying between $300 million and $500 million in damage claims, according to reliable estimates. By way of comparison, the $414 million we have cut from the budget of the CBC, despite promises to maintain stable funding, falls uncomfortably in the middle of those two figures.

Similarly, the decision to cut short the inquiry into the conduct of Canadian Forces personnel in Somalia may increasingly be seen as a political coverup, and the squabbling between International Trade Minister Art Eggleton and Heritage Minister Sheila Copps over the need to protect culture in international agreements could split the caucus. All of those issues could be short-circuited, delayed or swept under the mat with a spring election. And nothing unites Liberals more than victory.

3. We are the best prepared party to fight an election, with about 200 of the needed 301 candidates already in place. As for the rest, the Bloc Québécois is circling the wagons and shooting inward in an increasingly messy leadership race. Reform, on the other hand, has a leader who can't keep his most effective MPs. Still, given time, anything can happen: witness the rebirth of the Tories. Given even more time, some voters might remember that the New Democratic Party still exists.

4. Quebec. Right now, the last referendum is a painful, but receding, memory, and another one is still far away. Internal polls show that only 1.5 per cent of francophone Quebecers consider the Constitution a major issue. But within another year, Premier Lucien Bouchard, whose sovereigntist credentials are already suspect within the Parti Québécois, will face huge pressure to revive the issue. Who wants to fight a campaign over the issue that divides Canadians most—and upon which the party's credibility is weakest?

5. You, Prime Minister, have emphasized that you are not obliged to call an election until October, 1998—five years after the last one. But each passing month increases the inevitable spate of articles about the end of the millennium. By next year, you will be 64, one year away from the usual age of retirement. Do we really want all those predictable articles about Canada facing the dawn of a new millennium under the leadership of a senior citizen?

> How would you rather spend the summer: campaigning across the country on buses and planes—or playing golf?

6. The less Canadians hear about politics, the happier they are. The only real issue within caucus is whether an election should be held in spring or fall. Already, you have done the wise thing by trimming the length of the official campaign to 35 from 47 days. But that, as one of your personal advisers says, is only an artificial distinction if the election is held this fall. In that event, to quote your own adviser, "it really becomes a three-month election because it will be preceded by a phoney war all summer long."

7. Finally, on a personal note, Prime Minister, how would you rather spend the summer: campaigning across the country on an endless succession of buses, aircraft, whistle stops and stump speeches—or on the golf course?

For those and other reasons, we respectfully suggest and request an election be held on Monday, June 9. The future begins now.

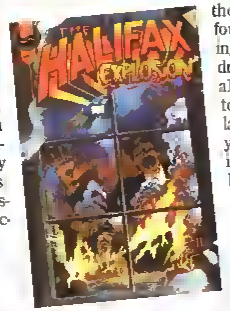
Opening Notes

Edited by BARBARA WICKENS

Eastern aftershocks

In February, more than 900 McDonald's outlets will distribute free copies of *The Halifax Explosion*, a comic book about the deadly blast on Dec 6, 1917 The full-color book is the first in a series from True North, a joint venture between the CRB Foundation and publisher McClelland & Stewart. The comics—based on the foundation's popular Heritage Minutes, historical vignettes that have been on television for six years—are intended to make Canadian history accessible to today's youngsters Even so, some Haligonians and historians are unhappy with the depiction of the explosion that killed 1,600 after the French munitions ship Mont Blanc, loaded with benzol and TNT, collided with the Belgian relief ship Imo in Halifax harbor

Janet Kitz, who has written two books about the explosion, says the comic contains a number of factual errors, including embellishment of the role played by telegraph operator Vince Coleman, "There's just no reason to have this type of inaccuracy when the accurate story is dramatic enough," says Kitz Annie Welsh has a more personal objection to the comic book She was just 23 months old when the explosion killed her mother and five-year-old brother in their home Welsh, who was found by a soldier searching for his own lost children, says comics are usually reserved for funny topics "It's nothing to laugh about," says the 82-year-old "It wasn't a comic when my mother and brother died And a lot of other people lost their loved ones"



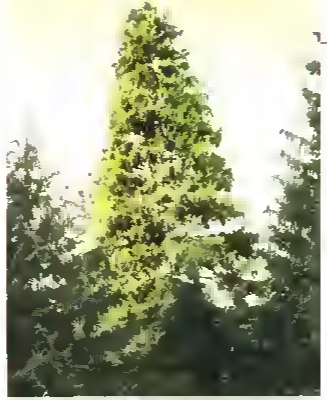


CANAPRESS

Scene from the disaster; the comic: historians' objections

Sinking feeling for the royals

This was supposed to be the year to burnish the British Royal Family's public image celebrations to mark the Queen and Prince Philip's golden wedding anniversary; a marriage, perhaps, for third son Edward to the by now well-vetted Sophie Rhys-Jones; and, most mercifully, a truce in the Charles and Diana slugfest So imagine Her Majesty's sinking heart last week when the daily papers landed at Buckingham Palace, carrying reports of a public row over whether British taxpayers should pay the $130-million bill to build a replacement for the royal yacht Britannia The ship is 44 years old and another refit was deemed too expensive In a burst of pre-election enthusiasm, the normally spendthrift Tories agreed on Jan 22 to pay for a new yacht. But they had ignored the convention of getting all-party backing for policies affecting the Royal Family, and opposition Labour was not amused Leader Tony Blair said there would be no public money for a royal yacht in a Labour government's first budget. The Queen was suddenly said to be "dismayed" at finding herself at the centre of a national debate over whether to spend taxpayers' money on the monarchy



The spruce: living on through saplings

A golden legend

When an unemployed former forest technician took a chainsaw to a rare golden Sitka spruce on the Queen Charlotte Islands in late January, he cut into more than he anticipated Thomas Grant Hadwin, 48, declared in a widely circulated fax that he felled the 300-year-old giant to express "rage" towards "university trained professionals." But those most shocked by the act were the islands' Haida inhabitants, for whom the 50-m tree, which got its rare coloring from a genetic defect, was a living relic of tribal legend

According to Haida tradition, the golden spruce was once K'iid K'iyaas, a young boy who, with his grandfather, was the sole survivor of a storm that killed everyone else in their village. As they began their trek to a new home, the grandfather warned the lad not to look back But the boy disobeyed and was instantly rooted in the soil "The tree is part of our culture," says Haida local Beryl Parke "I felt like I lost a family member" However the tree may live on Foresters at the University of British Columbia have revealed that cuttings from the spruce were secretly propagated there in the 1960s, and that two saplings sharing their parent's coloring are growing on campus UBC has offered the two trees to the Haida Hadwin, meanwhile, will appear in court in April to face charges of mischief

Bighearted Brian

When he left the Prime Minister's Office, Brian Mulroney was extremely unpopular with the masses. But those who know him personally are well acquainted with his thoughtfulness to friends The latest example of Mulroney's largess came when he learned that Nick Auf der Maur, a colorful Montreal columnist, had been diagnosed with throat cancer. On the weekend that Mulroney's lawyers were thrashing out a settlement with the federal government over his libel suit, Mulroney called Auf der Maur several times and began working the phones arranging medical help and advice "That's what I found astonishing," says Auf der Maur, 54, who is undergoing radiation therapy "He was doing a lot of stuff while his own world was in flux." Mulroney also arranged to get Auf der Maur in to see noted Montreal cancer specialist Dr Phil Gold Says Auf der Maur: "He's got a real heart."

No friend of gays

WORD FOR WORD

Last year, Reform party MP Bob Ringma of Nanaimo, B.C., provoked a barrage of criticism when he declared that employers should have the right to send a black or homosexual employee to the back of the shop if they made customers uncomfortable. Since then, Reform Leader Preston Manning has been trying to downplay suggestions that his party is extreme. He recently gave his first interview to a gay and lesbian publication, the biweekly newspaper XTRA! West *in Vancouver. Some excerpts:*



ALEC POITRAS/CP

Manning 'frank'

XW: *Would Reform be willing to accept any type of state-sanctioned same-sex partnership?*

Manning: Our definition of family and marriage does not include homosexual unions If people who have a dependent relationship, whether homosexuals or other, want to come and argue with Parliament that their relationships should be recognized by the state, they should be free to do it.

XW: *Is there anything else you want to tell our readers?*

Manning: Well, I'll be really frank with you, I do not think a gay or lesbian person would be attracted to the Reform party because of our policy on sexual politics. But if members of your community are concerned about jobs, taxes, bashing, crime, the lack of law, unity of the country, the deterioration of the social safety net, then in Reform they will find something attractive.

BEST-SELLERS

FICTION

1 **Drums of Autumn,** *Diana Gabaldon (1)*
2 **Alias Grace,** *Margaret Atwood (2)*
3 **Fall on Your Knees,** *Ann Marie MacDonald (5)*
4 **Hornet's Nest,** *Patricia Cornwell*
5 **The Englishman's Boy,** *Guy Vanderhaeghe (4)*
6 **The Tailor of Panama,** *John le Carré*
7 **You Went Away,** *Timothy Findley (8)*
8 **Silent Witness,** *Richard North Patterson (9)*
9 **Last Orders,** *Graham Swift (3)*
10 **Airframe,** *Michael Crichton (7)*

NONFICTION

1 **Boom, Bust & Echo,** *David Foot and Daniel Stoffman (1)*
2 **Simple Abundance,** *Sarah Ban Breathnach (2)*
3 **Angela's Ashes** *Frank McCourt*
4 **The Reichmanns** *Anthony Bianco (3)*
5 **A History of Reading,** *Alberto Manguel (8)*
6 **The Soul's Code** *James Hillman (5)*
7 **The Path to Love,** *Deepak Chopra (7)*
8 **My Secret,** *Ekaterina Gordeeva (4)*
9 **Sex in the Snow** *Michael Adams (5)*
10 **Emotional Intelligence** *Daniel Goleman*

() Position last week Compiled by Brian Bethune

Till death do us . . .

In *Monogamy*, British writer and psychoanalyst Adam Phillips takes on such subjects as fidelity, guilt, loneliness, love and happiness in a collection of 120 sometimes pithy aphorisms A sample ' The outlaw, the femme fatale, the heretic, the double agent, the pun—infidelity gets all the action It has the glamor of the bad secret and the good lie So what would we have to do to make monogamy glamorous?"

POP MOVIES

The lava will flow



Following on the success of last summer's *Twister*, film studios are hoping that natural disasters will continue to spell blockbuster The first calamity movie of 1997 is Universal's *Dante's Peak*, starring Pierce Brosnan, Linda Hamilton—and spectacular special effects of an erupting volcano Fox will let loose its *Volcano* this spring

Top movies in Canada ranked according to box-office receipts during the seven days that ended on Jan 30 (in brackets, numbers of screens/weeks showing)

1	**Evita** *(87/5)*	$980,340
2	**Metro** *(120/2)*	$746,250
3	**Jerry Maguire** *(121/7)*	$711,420
4	**Beverly Hills Ninja** *(95/3)*	$642,040
5	**Fierce Creatures** *(121/1)*	$528,920
6	**In Love and War** *(84/1)*	$390,730
7	**The Relic** *(79/3)*	$328,690
8	**The People vs Larry Flynt** *(72/5)*	$317,240
9	**The English Patient** *(29/11)*	$315,140
10	**Zeus and Roxanne** *(82/1)*	$302,430

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Passages

SWORN IN: As lieutenant-governor of Quebec, activist **Lise Thibault**, 57, the first woman to hold the post Thibault, whose work on behalf of the disabled in Quebec has received wide acclaim, is a federalist who says she intends to be neutral in the viceregal role At her swearing-in, she revealed that she had consulted the spirits of deceased friends and relatives before accepting the post Her predecessor, actor **Jean-Louis Roux**, who resigned in November after confirming that he wore a Nazi swastika in 1942, had angered the Parti Québécois government when he said he might refuse to sign a sovereignty bill after a Yes vote in a referendum



CANAPRESS

NANED: Philadelphia Flyers vice-president **Bob Clarke** as general manager of the 1998 Canadian Olympic hockey team Clarke, 47 who played for Team Canada in the 1972 Summit Series against the Soviet Union will be assisted by Dallas Stars GM **Bob Gainey** and Ottawa Senators GM **Pierre Gaultier** Nagano will host the first Olympic tournament that is open to all players, including NHL professionals

APPOINTED: As president of York University in Toronto, former senator **Lorna Marsden**, 54 Marsden will resign from the presidency of one of Canada's smallest universities, Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ont , with its 5,846 full-time students and $56-million budget to take over at York, the country's third-largest, with 40,000 students and a budget of $290 million

DIED: **Frank Dilio** 84, who was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame in 1964 for his role in building junior hockey in Quebec, of cancer, in a Montreal hospital

DIED: First World War flying ace **Cecil Lewis**, 98, who helped found the BBC, in a London hospital

DIED: Tin Pan Alley composer **Gerald Marks**, 96 who was best known for the 1931 song *All of Me*, in New York City

DIED: Astrologer **Jeane Dixon**, 79, who gained prominence as a psychic after her 1956 prediction that President **John F. Kennedy** would die in office came true, of cardiopulmonary arrest, in Washington.

Feeling the heat

The decision was already controversial. But last week, Defence Minister Doug Young's earlier refusal to extend the Somalia commission of inquiry past its March 31 deadline became even more so. At issue was an affidavit, filed to the commission and swiftly released to the media, from John Dixon. In it, the former special adviser to Kim Campbell accused senior officials in the department of national defence of attempting to cover up the brutal March 16, 1993, killing of a Somali teenager by Canadian soldiers—and of trying to keep Campbell, then the Tory defence minister, from looking into the incident. The affidavit created a furor because it is highly unlikely that either Dixon or Campbell will be given a chance to testify before the three-member commission ends its hearings. And, last week, members of the political opposition served notice that extending the Somalia inquiry will be their top priority when Parliament resumes this week. "I had looked forward to Young taking the reins," said Reform party defence critic Jim Hart. "But his integrity is being questioned by everybody at this point."

With the Liberals widely expected to call a June election, will Young back down? Not if the testimony of Vice-Admiral Larry Murray, acting chief of the defence staff, was any indication. On Jan. 28, Murray appeared before the inquiry—and angrily castigated commission chairman Gilles Létourneau. Refusing to obey the commission's request for simple yes and no answers, Murray lashed out. "I have been appalled by the way this commission, and you in particular, have treated junior soldiers," he declared. "I don't intend to be treated the same way." In the end, an equally angry Létourneau adjourned the hearing, then warned Murray that he risked being cited for contempt. "While he is here, he's under a duty to testify and to do so in a manner that is respectful," Létourneau said. Although the vice-admiral was more cooperative during his subsequent testimony, he remained unrepentant. And some observers speculated that he had acted with the tacit approval of his political masters. Noted retired major general Lewis MacKenzie, who will run as a Conservative candidate in the next federal election. "That was not Larry Murray acting on his own—he was likely encouraged to vent his frustration."

But frustration that the inquiry will end with too many unanswered questions, most of them revolving around the issue of who knew what and when, also continues to mount. And Dixon's affidavit—as well as another one filed last week by Marianne Campbell, also an aide to the former defence minister—only fuelled the debate. It came as a response to a November, 1994, memo, written by naval Capt. Fred Blair and released by the commission on Jan. 13. In that memo, Blair claimed that Dixon and Marianne Campbell were briefed on March 26, 1993, on the details of 16-year-old Shidane Arone's torture and murder—well before the story became public on March 31. Blair also wrote that Kim Campbell—who was then preparing to launch her campaign for the Tory leadership—even offered "guidance" on how the military should conduct its investigation.

> "I have been appalled at the way this commission has treated junior soldiers"
>
> —Vice-Admiral Larry Murray



PETER JONES/REUTERS



> "While here, he's under a duty to testify"
>
> —Chairman Gilles Létourneau

PHOTO BY JEAN CHAPPIUS

Campbell and her former aides have always denied that they were appraised of the details before the story broke. "These claims of Capt. Blair are utter and complete falsehood," Dixon wrote in his affidavit, which he filed along with a request to appear before the inquiry. And he went on to level further, troubling accusations. "There is now clear evidence of a coverup" in the immediate aftermath of the Arone killing, he alleged—a coverup that included a subsequent attempt by senior DND officials to keep Campbell's office from looking into Arone's death. In an April 4, 1993, letter to Campbell that Dixon said was a clear attempt to intimidate the minister, Blair wrote that "in spite of the explanations that have been provided to you, you still have difficulty with the idea that the minister should not attempt to exercise political influence over the unfolding of these processes." And, Blair added, "one may imagine the effect on the minister's present situation should it be revealed that she had interfered, or attempted to do so, with the course of military justice in this highly sensitive case."

Campbell, Dixon said, viewed the letter as "blackmail." Even worse, he wrote, were subsequent attempts by senior DND officials to destroy all traces of the document. Dixon claims that then-deputy defence minister Robert Fowler, now Canada's ambassador to the United Nations, and Admiral John Anderson, the former chief of the defence staff and now Canada's ambassador to NATO, shredded their copies of the letter to Campbell. But when military officials asked Dixon and Marianne Campbell to surrender their copies, they refused—and instead locked them in a safe. "If we really wanted to turn this whole affair into a nightmare," Dixon recalled in his affidavit, "then the destruction of a document was a fine first step."

Both Fowler and Anderson have previously denied that any coverup took place. Last week, Fowler, a well-connected career civil servant who is also the brother-in-law of Gov. Gen. Roméo LeBlanc, declined to comment to reporters. Anderson, contacted by *Maclean's* at his home in Brussels, refused to specifically address the issue of Dixon's affidavit. But he was openly contemptuous of Campbell. Referring to an interview that he gave to *Maclean's* in April, 1993, in which he said that the Somalia scandal reflected a possible breakdown in the Canadian military's discipline and leadership, Anderson said that he stood by his statements. And recalling Campbell's reaction to his comments—she was, in fact, furious over not being informed—Anderson added, "Much to the disgust of one minister Campbell."

Like Campbell, who last week again expressed dismay that she will not get a chance to tell her story, Anderson and Fowler will not be called to testify before the commission. And despite widespread calls for extending the deadline, the federal Liberals seem intent on ending the inquiry, which began in 1994 and had gone through 151 days of testimony by Jan. 31. Having ordered the commissioners to wrap up their hearings by the end of March, Young has given them until June 30 to file their report. The minister, claimed retired colonel Michel Drapeau, a bitter critic of the defence establishment and a close observer of the inquiry, "is in one helluva rush to close this thing down and get to the campaign before the report comes out." But with so many questions likely to remain unanswered, Young is also under growing pressure to give the commissioners time to unravel the Somalia affair—no matter what the political cost may be.

LUKE FISHER *in Ottawa*

STILL ON THE AGENDA

They are three very busy men. With Defence Minister Doug Young's order that the Somalia inquiry end its hearings by March 31 and deliver a report by the end of June, commission chairman Gilles Létourneau and his colleagues Peter Desbarats and Robert Rutherford have already lengthened their daily sessions by one hour. Even so, with only seven more weeks of scheduled hearings—the commissioners will take one week to analyze testimony they have already heard—time is at a premium. The commission is now trying to get a clear picture of on-the-ground events in Somalia during Canada's troubled 1992-1993 mission, an examination that will take the inquiry to the end of its allotted time—and, commissioners claim, not allow for crucial testimony from others.

Still on the agenda:

- Vice-Admiral Larry Murray, who will continue to testify this week.
- Next up will be Maj. Marc Philippe, who was the legal adviser to the mission commanded by Col. Serge Labbé, the overall commander of Canadian troops in Somalia. Philippe's testimony is expected to last no more than a day. He will be followed by Labbé, the commissioners expect that he will spend almost two weeks on the witness stand.
- The commission will also hear from retired lieutenant-colonel Carol Mathieu. In 1993, Mathieu was the commander of the Canadian Airborne regiment, which made up the bulk of Canada's forces in Somalia. He has undergone two courts martial—and both times was found not guilty of dereliction of duty. His testimony is likely to take the inquiry to the end of February. Mathieu is scheduled to be the last witness.

After actual testimony ends, the commissioners will take their week of analysis. Then, according to commission spokesperson Sheena Pennie, submissions and summations from various lawyers will likely take up the last three weeks of March. But, she adds, the three commissioners will not insist on more time for the inquiry. "They will work to get this thing done," Pennie said, "and will not beg for another extension."

L.F.

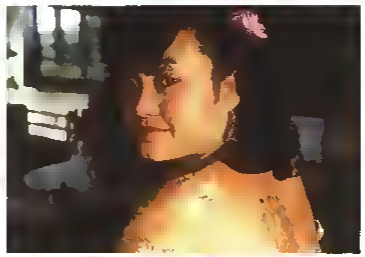
An extraordinary capacity to forgive

BY PATRICIA CHISHOLM





Kim with son, Thomas: 'Outside is cold, but the people are not'



Ut's famous photo of Kim in 1972, later with her scars (left): 'I thought, I become ugly girl'

Vietnam victim Phan Thi Kim Phuc has found peace in Canada

Her face is round and smooth and she laughs often. She is a grown woman now, a wife and mother living in a modest apartment in the area of Toronto's east end known as "little" Chinatown. But to the world, she is still frozen in time, a terrified nine-year-old girl running down a South Vietnamese country road in June, 1972. The stunning photograph, taken after she was badly burned in an American-ordered napalm bombing, won a Pulitzer Prize for Associated Press photographer Nick Ut and helped galvanize opposition to the war. The picture became so well known that the young victim, Phan Thi Kim Phuc, was widely interviewed in the mid-1980s by Western journalists visiting Vietnam. For the past decade, however, she has mostly hidden herself from view, determined to build a life out of the public eye. Now a permanent resident in Canada after defecting from her temporary home in Cuba in 1992, the 33-year-old Kim has decided to talk once again about her experiences. "I hope my story can help people," she explains, speaking in a softly accented English during a recent interview with *Maclean's*. "It happen too much, the fighting."

There are many parts to Kim's journey: her long and agonizing recovery from the third-degree burns that covered her back, shoulder and one arm, her difficult relationship with the media exposure that both saved her life—journalists who witnessed the attack helped get her treatment—and later became a burden to her, her struggle to establish a normal life in the West. Most remarkable of all, however, is Kim's astonishing capacity to forgive. Last fall, Kim participated in a Veterans Day ceremony at the Vietnam War Memorial in Washington. A documentary by Canadian independent filmmaker Shelley Saywell, airing on the CBC series *Witness* on Feb. 11, captures an unanticipated and emotional meeting with Capt. John Plummer, the man who ordered South Vietnamese pilots to make the fateful air strike on her village. As the two sit side by side, smiling and holding hands, it is clear that she bears him nothing but goodwill. Kim says her Christian faith is what protects her from bitterness, but others say religion alone cannot explain her extraordinary personal strength. "She is very unusual that way," says Nancy Pocock, a member of the Quaker Committee for Refugees in Toronto, who has become like a mother to Kim. "It's very human to resent it if you've been so badly hurt."

There is much to resent. As Kim recalls the attack, the panic and destruction of the war seem eerily close. The bombs, intended for North Vietnamese positions near her village of Trang Bang, by accident hit fleeing villagers. "Right away, I know my clothes are burning, everything, and I saw my hand, my arm burning," she says. "I thought, 'Oh, my goodness, I become ugly girl, not normal like before.'" But then she started to run, desperate to escape the circle of fire, and there was, she says, "no more thinking." Just overwhelming fear, and later, a searing heat. She was barely aware of the photographers standing close by. But a video taken at the scene shows the terrible injuries to her back, where great swathes of skin were destroyed by the napalm, a thickener that turns gasoline into a jelly-like concoction that sticks to surfaces, including skin, as it burns. A three-year-old cousin and his nine-month-old brother were also badly burned and later died.

Kim, as she often says, was lucky. Nick Ut rushed her to a nearby hospital. She was later transferred to another in Saigon specializing in plastic surgery. "That is a terrible time for me," she says, remembering the excruciating daily sessions in a medicated bath, followed by the cutting away of damaged skin—while she drifted in and out of consciousness. Her sister fainted from shock at the sight.

Finally, 14 months and many operations later, Kim was released. But the war was still raging and Trang Bang was under constant threat. Her home was destroyed, although no other family members were wounded. In April, 1975, when the United States finally withdrew from Vietnam, the fighting was particularly intense, she recalls with many casualties. "The world in Vietnam is not just that picture," she emphasizes. "It happen everywhere. A lot of people die and a lot of people suffering." They did not, she adds, have the good fortune to be in a famous picture. "Very important," she adds, "I am alive [to talk about the past]. If I die, that picture is just history."

The blessing has, however, been decidedly mixed. In the early 1980s, Western journalists began asking to speak with her. The North Vietnamese government, which took over the south in 1975, understood her power as an anti-American symbol, and she gave many interviews. At first, she was surprised and proud. "Wow, you are nothing, and now something new come into my life," she remembers thinking. But later, when she moved to Saigon to study medicine, the interruptions became too frequent, interfering with her studies. Finally, the government in Tainin, the region where Trang Bang is located, asked her to leave school and stay in her village to do the interviews close to the place where the photograph was taken. Disheartened, she decided in 1986 to continue her studies in Cuba, this time in pharmacology. There, already plagued by recurring knife-like pain from her injuries, she developed asthma and diabetes, which forced her to cut back on her classes. But she also met her future husband, fellow Vietnamese student Bui Huy Toan, in Cuba, where they married in 1992.

Meanwhile, she nursed her dreams of escaping to the West. Once, she tried unsuccessfully to enter the United States through Mexico. The opportunity to defect finally came when she and her husband flew to Moscow for their honeymoon. For their return flight to Cuba—with a brief stop in Gander—they were required to obtain a visa from the Canadian consulate in Moscow. "I thought, 'Oh, bingo!'" she says, laughing as she recalls grasping the coveted piece of paper in her hand. "I just have in my mind, I want to be free," she adds more soberly.

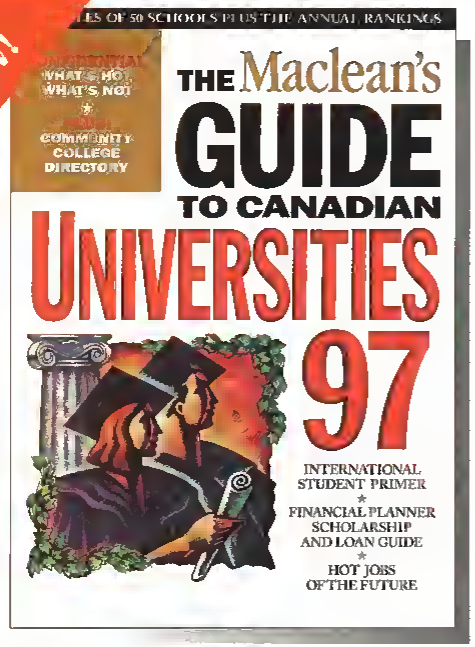
When they got off in Gander for a refuelling stop, Kim told Toan she was not going to get back on. With no friends, no money—not even their luggage, which they had to leave on the plane—Kim's first move was to telephone Ut, whom she calls Uncle Nick. But she was unable to reach him at his home in Los Angeles. Instead, she dialled a friend in New York City, who gave her Pocock's telephone number. "She so surprised, a Vietnamese who speak Spanish,' Kim recalls of their first conversation. Pocock encouraged her to come to Toronto and the department of immigration paid for their three-day trip by bus, boat and train. Arriving at Toronto's Union Station in midwinter was hardly a relief. Despite elation over leaving Cuba, there was also fear. "It's really hard," she says. "We are in the jungle, we don't know anything."

Pocock helped, emotionally and in other ways. She referred Kim to an immigration lawyer and the pair were quickly granted refugee status. Almost immediately, the media calls started coming, but with a few exceptions, she refused. "I don't want to be famous," she remembers thinking. "I really don't want it—I so scared already." But the past few years of calm have allowed Kim to begin feeling more secure. Her family lived on welfare for a few years, until Toan found work as a nurse's assistant at minimum wage. Kim stays home with their two-year-old son, Thomas, who is clearly the centre of the couple's universe. Lively and outgoing—he kisses an unknown visitor, twice—Thomas responds cheerfully when his parents ask him to spell his name, recite the English alphabet and count up to 10, in three languages.

If many of their hopes now centre on their son, Kim and Toan have not abandoned dreams of their own. They expect to become Canadian citizens within a year. Much of their social life revolves around their Baptist congregation, but Kim admits she is sometimes lonely. She especially misses her parents, whom she has not seen since she left Vietnam in 1986. Her goal, when there is enough money, is to attend bible college. "I feel so safe here," she says. "Outside is cold, but the people are not cold—they warm."

Kim has now come to view talking about her story as a forceful way to explain the tragedy and waste of war. But with such constant reminders of the past, she is vigilant about the pitfalls of sadness and depression. As much as possible, she avoids reflecting on the war. "I never do sorrow like that," she says. To feel a trace of bitterness, even deep inside, she says, is too tiring, too heavy. "With me," she says smiling, "the inside is the same as the outside." □

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WHAT MATTERS TO CANADIANS



Cockburn (left) and Finkelstein: the minister of trade is 'throwing up his hands'

CANADA

Lowering the gate

Even from 5,700 km away in Paris, Sheila Copps can still work up an impressive level of righteous indignation when talk turns to what has become her pet subject. "Culture is not pork bellies," Canada's heritage minister—and therefore the federal government's ranking culture guru—railed last week. "On that the government has total unanimity." Maybe, but it is still easy to see why Copps felt so anxious to make her point last week. International Trade Minister Art Eggleton had, after all, stunned artists, entertainment executives and even cultural nationalists within his own government with his blunt questioning of protectionist policies for culture during a panel discussion in Toronto three days earlier. And no amount of tough talk from Copps could quite ease fears in the arts community that Ottawa is ready to start lowering the trade barriers and treating Canadian books, records, movies and TV shows like workaday commodities.

In a way, the cultural sector is right to be worried. The World Trade Organization's Jan. 16 interim ruling against Ottawa's attempts to protect the country's magazine industry from U.S. competition was clearly bad news for Canadian periodicals. But it also may have been just the opening the U.S. government and the powerful American entertainment industry needed. U.S. government sources say that serious negotiations with Ottawa on Canada's cultural protection are expected to begin "in the next few weeks." And the Clinton administration intends to increase pressure on Canada—a fact underscored in comments by Charlene Barshefsky, Washington's acting trade representative. "We have no objection to the promotion by Canada, or other countries, of national identity through cultural development," she said last week. "But we do object to the use of culture as an excuse to take commercial advantage of the United States, or as an excuse to evict American companies from the Canadian market."

The magazine industry ruling—and the spectre of further WTO challenges by the United States—clearly leaves Canada with diminished leverage. Officials close to Barshefsky say Ottawa has overplayed its hand and damaged its overall case by mixing concerns over the protection of legitimate aspects of Canadian culture—for example the CBC—with "comic attempts" at cultural protectionism, such as forcing Country Music Television out of Canada in 1995 with the advent of a domestic music network. The upshot: Washington now expects Canada to drop some of the policies that U.S. officials dismiss as frivolous—but it may show greater flexibility on other issues. "The spread of cultural protectionism has made the U.S. look more closely at Canada as one place to make a stand," warns Charles Doran, director of Canadian Studies at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies in Washington. "There are some tough sessions ahead." Added Arthur Sackler, vice-president, law and public policy, for media giant Time Warner Inc.: "We have no grand plan for some sort of assault on Canada—but the freer the controls on cultural products, the better off we all are."

Is Can-cult protection about to disappear?

Last week, Ottawa said that no new round of negotiations has been scheduled. Even so, has the government already shown its hand? Eggleton told Maclean's he remains "passionate about Canadian culture and identity and their preservation." And he claimed his comments were meant as a "wake up call"—and not a sweeping dismissal of all existing policies. But he pointed out that Canadian content regulations were brought in 30 years ago—and that even "things which are sacred cows could need to be looked at." His comments led some in the Canadian cultural sector, among them Bernie Finkelstein, president of Toronto-based True North Records, to insist that Ottawa is simply running scared from the Americans. "Canada's minister of trade is throwing up his hands in surrender and saying, 'I'm powerless, there is nothing that can be done [to protect Canadian culture].' " said Finkelstein, whose label includes singer-songwriter Bruce Cockburn.

Copps, meanwhile, played down any suggestion of a squabble with Eggleton by saying that his Toronto remarks "raised some pertinent questions." (In fact, she also acknowledged last week that Eggleton had consulted with her before his Toronto appearance—leading to speculation that his comments had been part of a joint campaign to draw more attention to the issue.) And she scoffed at speculation that the trade minister had floated a trial balloon for a shift in government cultural policy. "We intend to use every and any tool possible to assist our cultural industries," she declared. The effectiveness and fairness of existing measures will be addressed by a round-table discussion that Copps will chair in Ottawa later this month. Last week, she was in France, looking for an ally in her mission to have cultural protections written into international trade agreements. And she again hinted that the government may well appeal if the WTO ultimately rules against Canada when the final magazine policy decision is issued later this month. "Right now, though," she emphasized, "that is all hypothetical." Maybe so. But the debate over cultural protection is real—and one that will not go away.

JOHN DeMONT *in Ottawa with* **WILLIAM LOWTHER** *in Washington*

Blood pressure

Under heavy fire, the Red Cross fights back

The meeting will be focused on the future—but clouded by the past. When Canada's health ministers gather in Fredericton in late February, they will grapple yet again with the restructuring of the country's blood system—and the role of the Ottawa-based Canadian Red Cross Society. But they will also be saddled with disturbing new questions. In a report released late last month, federal Information Commissioner John Grace disclosed that the now defunct Canadian Blood Committee, which oversaw the system in the 1980s, destroyed records of meetings that took place between 1982 and 1989 and co-operated with Red Cross efforts to avoid public scrutiny. Both organizations, Grace concluded, were concerned about potential lawsuits arising out of the tainted blood scandal. His findings have unleashed a fresh wave of criticism from surviving victims and their representatives. "We're absolutely aghast," said Halifax lawyer Dawna Ring, who represents Janet Conners, a victim of the tragedy. "Why is there any discussion about a continued role for the Red Cross if they can't be open and accountable?"

With the issue of the destroyed tapes and transcripts still simmering, the Red Cross upped the ante last week. Secretary general Douglas Lindores announced a contentious new legal move against Justice Horace Krever and his three-year, $14-million inquiry into the tainted blood scandal, in which some 1,200 people contracted AIDS and an estimated 12,000 became infected with hepatitis C in the early to mid-1980s. The organization is seeking leave to appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada to prevent Krever from blaming any current or former employees in his final report on the tragedy, which is supposed to be submitted to federal Health Minister David Dingwall by April 30. Red Cross lawyers have already argued their case, unsuccessfully, before the Federal Court of Canada and the Federal Court of Appeal. But Lindores said the society must do everything possible to protect the reputation of employees against what he called "allegations that are totally unsubstantiated by the evidence presented to the inquiry."

Victims' groups denounced the latest Red Cross move, charging that for years the society has attempted to block the release of documents and other information that would shed light on its role in the distribution of tainted blood products. They also argued that the Canadian Blood Committee tapes and transcripts could have proved invaluable to the Krever inquiry. "Those records would have shown why decisions were made, and whose interests were being protected," said Durhane Wong Rieger, president of the Montreal-based Canadian Hemophilia Society. "They would have revealed what messages ministers or deputy ministers were sending to the committee."



Grace: concerns fuelled by 'litigation and liability issues'

But one former member of the committee, which was disbanded in 1991 and replaced by the Canadian Blood Agency, dismissed those arguments. Dr. Robin Hutchinson, a Nanaimo, B.C.-based physician who has served on both bodies, said that the tapes and transcripts were prepared to ensure that accurate minutes could be compiled in two official languages. The records were destroyed, he insisted, because they were deemed to be of no interest to anyone, and were taking up too much space in the committee's small Ottawa administrative offices. "It's like you emptied your wastebasket after eight years, and somebody says you're a crook," he said. "It's overblown."

Still, in his report, Grace rejected similar explanations offered by Dr. Jo Hauser, a senior federal bureaucrat and the committee's executive director at the time (he has since retired from the civil service). The information commissioner says the destruction occurred after a journalist applied under the federal Access to Information Act for records of three committee meetings held between February, 1988, and February, 1989. Hauser received the application on May 1, and the committee reached its decision to destroy the tapes and transcripts during a meeting held from May 16 to 18 in Winnipeg. In notes he made during that meeting, Hauser wrote: "Since the minutes contain sensitive information, it was agreed that they should be destroyed."

Grace found that other methods were also used to withhold records from the public. As early as April, 1988, according to the commissioner, Red Cross executives informed members of the blood committee that they were opposed to releasing any of their blood-related documents under the access law, and declared that they would "resist any disclosure by taking the matter to the Federal Court." In some cases, the Red Cross refused to send documents to the committee because it feared that the committee could be forced to release them. "There is no doubt," Grace concluded, "that the Red Cross's preoccupation with the Access to Information Act arose from its concern with litigation and liability issues." That same preoccupation remains a factor in the organization's continuing legal battle against the Krever inquiry. Red Cross lawyers have argued that, by singling out individual employees for blame, Krever would be damaging their reputations. Some of those individuals could eventually be called to testify in lawsuits. In any event, the Red Cross's latest salvo could delay the release of Krever's report, and muddy the waters for Canada's health ministers.

D'ARCY JENISH



Liberet and children: no more 'Weekend Dads'

BRYAN SCHLOSSER

Post-marital battlegrounds

Lines harden over parental rights

When Randy Liberet joined Weekend Dads late last year, members of the support group for divorced fathers in Regina asked him to help decorate a float for the annual Santa Claus parade. A nice idea, but it was not what he had in mind. "I didn't want to just accept things the way they are," says Liberet, 37, a father of three in the midst of a divorce. "I felt we had to become advocates, to make changes," he recalls. "And the first thing should be to change the name of the organization—Weekend Dads was what we didn't want to be." Now, Weekend Dads is going beyond being an emotional support group to become a political action group calling itself the National Shared Parenting Association. It aims to mobilize men who have limited access to their children—and feel their kids are suffering as a result—into a national lobby organization. Its purpose: to challenge a family law system that the group contends is unfairly biased in favor of women.

For some divorced fathers, correcting that bias has become not only a cause, but a passion. Plans are in the works for a national conference in March. "We hope to bring together about 50 like-minded groups from across Canada representing as many as 3,000 people," said Liberet. The Regina men and their male allies elsewhere are not alone in their challenge. Most notably, the related issue of financial support for the children of separated parents has provoked bitter debate in Ottawa with combative Liberal Senator Anne Cools, a former social worker, standing up for fathers. Last week, Cools gained national attention when her opposition to new federal child-support legislation as perpetuating "a bias against men"—she accuses its feminist supporters of "father-bashing"—placed the proposed new law in jeopardy. "It degrades fatherhood," said Cools, whose vote in the closely divided Senate could spell life or death for the measure (it handily cleared the Commons).

Critics of the custody and child-support systems say the odds are stacked against men. In 86 per cent of Canadian child custody cases in 1995 where one parent won, that parent was the mother. Although such imbalance is not new, what has changed is a growing unwillingness among men to passively accept their fate as noncustodial parents with limited access to their children. "After 30 years of feminism, the idea that women should raise the children does not work any more," says Mike LaBerge of Calgary, a member of the Equitable Child Maintenance and Access Society, a 1,500-family organization seeking more evenhanded treatment of mothers and fathers. With women becoming full partners in the workforce, the traditional roles of husband and wife in the rearing of children have changed dramatically. "Still," says LaBerge, "men subconsciously think they can't take their children away from their mother."

Many specialists in child custody issues argue, however, that court decisions reflect the reality of the family before a divorce. The family law system is specifically mandated to act in the best interests of the children, notes Ottawa family lawyer Barbara Thompson, a member of the advisory committee on child support for the National Association of Women and the Law in Ottawa. Children can be used as weapons in the battle between divorcing parents, she observes, leading a parent who was not closely involved in the child's life to demand custody. "What happens is arrangements at the end of the marriage generally reflect the status quo," she says.

The pattern in child support similarly rests on the tradition of the father as primary breadwinner, suggests Cools and other critics. Cools, 53, an adviser in Family Mediation Canada, an association of mediators primarily involved in divorce and separation, argues that if feminism's goal is the equality of women, "that's not what it's proposing" in systems that favor mothers. "Feminists have terrorized people for so long that they're afraid to speak out," says the senator.

The bill involved in the current Cools fight in the Senate proposes specific income-based guidelines to determine the level of child support paid by noncustodial parents, usually fathers. It would set support payment levels with no regard to the income of the custodial parent, usually the mother. And Cools calls the legislation a "tax grab" unfair to fathers because it would no longer allow an income tax deduction for the payer of support, while the payments received would be tax free. But proponents insist the bill is essential for one-parent children. "There are far too many poor kids in Canada," said Louise Shaughnessy, a director at the Women and the Law association. "And this bill will help to change that."

Freeing support payments from taxation was a prime objective in a long struggle by women's groups. Following the failure of litigation in the Supreme Court of Canada in 1995, the Liberal government introduced the current legislation almost a year ago. It won endorsement from the Canadian Bar Association as well as women's groups and, last fall, the Commons. The ultimate outcome in Parliament is unlikely to dissolve the battle lines over child custody and support. As women's groups push the mother's case and men grow more militant on the other side, the emotional and monetary disputes that follow broken marriages seem certain to inflict scars—often on the children as well as the parents—as deeply as ever.

DALE EISLER *in Calgary*

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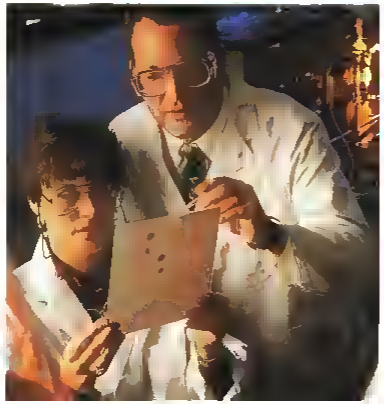
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Canada NOTES

MAYOR UNDER PRESSURE

Montreal Mayor Pierre Bourque's troubles worsened when Quebec Superior Court Justice Danielle Grenier ruled that Bourque cannot dismiss two dissident aldermen from the city's cabinet. Last month, Bourque cited the need for party loyalty before abruptly dismissing the two. Last week's decision further undermined his ability to rule council, and follows 212 electoral financing charges against the mayor's Vision Montreal party.

SEEKING A SEAT

NDP Leader Alexa McDonough, 52, announced that she will run for a House of Commons seat in Halifax—a riding currently held by Liberal Mary Clancy. McDonough is the only federal party leader without a seat. Meanwhile, ex-Reformer Jan Brown announced that she will seek the Conservative nomination in Calgary Southeast. Brown has been sitting as an Independent since she was forced out of Reform for calling the party a haven for extremists.

OUTCOME OF A BRAWL

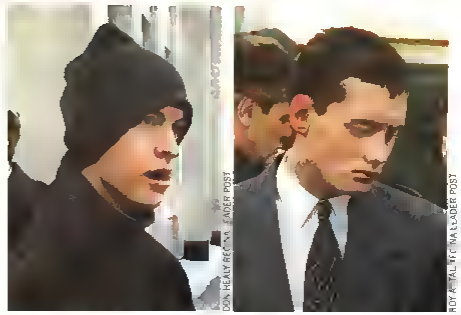
Al Hollingsworth, commissioner of the Maritime Junior A League, suspended Ben Metzger of the Dartmouth Oland Exports for 12 games for a Jan. 21 hockey brawl in which Metzger repeatedly punched Graham MacIsaac, who was sprawled on the ice unconscious. MacIsaac was suspended for five games because he had rejoined the brawl after a linesman had taken him to the bench.

EXTENDING MEDICARE

The National Forum on Health, appointed by Ottawa to study health care, said in a draft report that medicare should be expanded to include home care and prescription drugs. The report also says Canada should not cut health-care funding—currently set at over $70 billion a year.

THE TAR-POND PROBLEM

Federal, provincial and local officials announced that they are planning a $1.67-million search for a solution to Canada's worst toxic waste dump—the Sydney, N.S., tar ponds. Local residents, however, demanded immediate action. About $56 million has already been spent in efforts to clean up the 700,000 tonnes of PCB-laced sludge.



Kummerfield (left); Ternowetsky: 'white boys' get 6½ years

Native rage over a Prairie murder

Her relatives ran from the packed courtroom in tears. Justice Ted Malone of the Saskatchewan Court of Queen's Bench had just sentenced Alex Ternowetsky and Steven Kummerfield to 6½ years in prison for the savage beating death of Pamela George. The two university students, both 20, are white and middle class. George, an aboriginal, was a single mother of two young children who occasionally worked as a prostitute in Regina. Native leaders condemned the sentence as too lenient and said that racism was to blame. "It's all right for little white boys to go out on the streets, get drunk and use that for an excuse to start hunting down our own people," said Tony Cote of the Yorkton Tribal Council in eastern Saskatchewan. Chief Lindsay Kaye of the Sakimay First Nations demanded an inquiry. "There is a justice system for the Indians, a justice system for the white," Kaye said.

Ternowetsky and Kummerfield, a strong athlete who starred at basketball at the University of Regina, picked up George in downtown Regina in April, 1995, after an evening of heavy drinking. They took the 28-year-old outside the city for oral sex, then beat her so badly her family did not open the casket at her funeral. The two were charged with first-degree murder, but last December a jury found them guilty of the lesser charge of manslaughter. In a particularly controversial move, Malone instructed the jurors to consider that the two men had been drinking and that George "indeed was a prostitute"—which could have led to the manslaughter conviction. The Crown, upset by Malone's comments, has appealed the lesser conviction.

JUSTICE

Death on the high seas

After five months of bizarre and often conflicting testimony, ranging from questions of international law to the meaning of "walk the plank," a high-profile extradition hearing finished in Halifax. Justice Michael MacDonald will decide early next month whether there is enough evidence for six Taiwanese sailors, arrested in May, 1996, for the high-seas murder of three Romanian stowaways in March and May of the same year, to stand trial. If he does, Justice Minister Allan Rock will have to decide if they are to be extradited to Romania, as that country has requested, or Taiwan, which claims Romania's right to try the men.

The case became a Canadian matter when a Filipino crew member jumped ship in Halifax last May and told local police he saw the three stowaways put on small rafts and cast adrift near Spain.

Carving up the country

Sabres rattled on both sides of the separatism debate. First, outspoken media magnate Conrad Black told a Toronto audience that if Quebec eventually separates, not all Quebecers need join the new state. "The federalist elements in Quebec should consider seceding from Quebec," Black said, "as West Virginia seceded from secessionist Virginia in 1863."

Quebec Premier Lucien Bouchard dismissed the suggestion, saying it was "obviously a desperate attempt to counter Quebec democracy." Meanwhile, Quebec Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Jacques Brassard rejected the possibility that municipalities with federalist leanings, like Montreal, could secede from an independent Quebec. "The state would see to it that the laws be enforced," Brassard said. His words were more than an isolated riposte. The day before, Brassard had suggested that Quebec is preparing to counter all attempts—including armed attempts—by Ottawa to thwart separation. But Bouchard tried to play down the prospect of the federal government resorting to force. "I'm convinced," he said, "that those people in Ottawa whose brains are not yet fried aren't thinking about it."



Peruvian soldiers reacting to gunfire at the hostage compound: trigger-happy

BRENNAN LINSLEY/AP

Hostage summitry

BY ANTHONY WILSON-SMITH

Japan and Peru agree on talks with Lima's guerrillas

From Tokyo to Toronto to Lima, the business of life and death was on people's minds even more than usual last week. In settings ranging from a heavily guarded compound in Lima's middle-class San Isidro district to the plush confines of a 32nd floor private dining-room at Toronto's Four Seasons Hotel, the questions were always the same: what to do to end a standoff involving 15 Peruvian rebels and their 72 hostages without either bloodshed or loss of face? The apparent answer: keep on talking—and hope nothing unexpected happens.

Forty-six days after the rebels first stormed a high-powered party at Japan's embassy in Peru and took the celebrants hostage, that conclusion was reached by Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori and Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto at a weekend meeting in Toronto. There, after slightly more than two hours of private discussions last Saturday morning, they issued a nine-point joint communique headed by an agreement that Peru will now seek "the commencement of preliminary dialogues" with the Tupac Amaru rebel group, or MRTA. In addition, Japan's ambassador to Mexico will participate as an "official observer." Beyond that, the other points were little more than affirmations of good intentions, especially "to achieve a peaceful resolution to this incident."

The visiting leaders then joined Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and senior officials from all three governments for a 45 minute lunch. Over a meal that included a lobster and shrimp soup, tomato risotto, roast capon, maple and nut ice cream and a wine choice of Cave Spring Chardonnay Reserve '95 or Louis Jadot Pinot Noir '94, they reached a similar consensus. "We all," said Chrétien as he left the meeting with Canada's ambassador to Peru, Anthony Vincent, "just continue to hope for the best."

Keep waiting, watching and hoping. That, after a week of often intense speculation and rumor, was the final result of the Toronto summit. Even in the often exquisitely nuanced world of international diplomacy, where the angriest of exchanges are usually characterized as "frank discussions," there was remarkably little of substance. But if nothing else, the meeting quite literally brought home to Canadians the reality of a drama that has captured much of the world's attention since the rebels first stormed the Japanese ambassador's residence on Dec. 17. At the same time, the fact the meeting took place at all underscored the growing concern and frustration its participants feel in the face of a standoff in which neither side wants to be seen to blink.

The rebels continue to insist on the release of more than 400 imprisoned MRTA guerrillas before freeing the remaining hostages. Fujimori, whose political success is based at least partly on his reputation for toughness, insisted again on the weekend that he will not agree to that. "We simply cannot allow ourselves," he said, "to be ordered around by *terroristas*." And the leaders' communiqué noted pointedly that Hashimoto "supported President Fujimori in his rejection of the MRTA's demand for the release of the MRTA terrorists."

But behind the careful language and diplomatic niceties, there were signs that Japan—Peru's most important foreign investor, not least because of Fujimori's Japanese immigrant heritage—is not entirely at ease with his unbending position. The group of remaining hostages includes representatives of some of the country's most prominent companies, such as the Toyota, Nissan and Mitsubishi automobile manufacturers. One measure of the importance of the issue in Japan is that the news conference following the meeting of Hashimoto and Fujimori was televised live nationwide.

The plan to hold the summit came about at the request of Japan after several incidents early in the week in which both rebels and Peruvian troops appeared trigger-happy. In the most dramatic incident, the rebels fired upon a police car patrolling the perimeter of the Japanese compound after police made obscene gestures in their direction. After that, police stepped up their activities near the embassy, bringing in tanks and hundreds of soldiers from elite assault units, setting off sirens and blasting martial music through 12 enormous speakers aimed at the compound. In an interview in Lima just before he left for Toronto, Fujimori conceded that stricter orders to police to behave themselves were needed.

Canadian officials found themselves in the sometimes uncertain position of a host who cannot decide how to behave towards the invited guests. Officially, representatives of all three countries insisted that the principal reason that Toronto was chosen as host site was its convenience for both sides. And Canada has already played a role in the crisis through Vincent. The veteran diplomat, who is trained in antiterrorism techniques, has spoken regularly with the rebels in his role as negotiator since he himself was released as a hostage in late December.

In the days prior to the summit, a series of reports and rumors in diplomatic circles and the international media suggested that Canada was aiming at playing a more significant role. One theory was that Canada, because of its warm relations with Cuba, would take the lead in arranging for the rebels to be given safe passage to Havana. Another was that Canada offered the use of military personnel to provide a guard for the rebels if they accepted safe passage. But while Chrétien said that Canada would be "pleased if we can be of use," senior officials insisted that no specific offers of assistance had been made. The behavior of Canadian officials supported that: for one, Canada's highly regarded ambassador to Cuba, Mark Entwistle, who was in Toronto last week on separate business, flew out of the city several hours before the summit began. Diplomatic sources in Havana suggested that the Cuban government, which is seeking warmer relations with Western nations, has little interest in welcoming the rebels. Cuban officials, in discussing the issue, have also pointedly used the word "terrorists" to describe the MRTA.

In fact, Canada's most significant role in the crisis has centred from the start on Vincent. Soft-spoken, balding and unassuming, he has become a key member of the negotiating team appointed by Fujimori. Last weekend marked the first-ever meeting between Chrétien and Vincent, but not their first-ever conversation. That took place last Dec. 18 when they spoke by telephone immediately after Vincent was released, along with some other hostages. At that time, aides to Chrétien said, Vincent told the Prime Minister he thought he could play a role in talks and said: "I'm going back in." Responded an emotional Chrétien: "I want you to know that you don't have to go back. If you do, you are a brave man." After a two-day briefing in Ottawa and several days off, the 57 year-old Vincent returned to Lima to take a pivotal role in the five-member Commission of Guarantors, appointed to play the lead role in negotiations.

Now, even with Peru and Japan showing renewed interest in talks with the rebels, there is little likelihood that other circumstances will change. Fujimori's sole concession has been his recent suggestion that he will consider safe passage to a third country for the rebels. That is likely to be the dominant theme on the government side of continuing talks. But no third country has yet volunteered for that role—and the rebels continue to insist that this, in itself, is not enough. "We will not step back" on demands for a release of jailed guerrillas, vowed MRTA leader Nestor Cerpa after the summit. At the same time, Hashimoto, who reportedly was planning to urge Fujimori to consider releasing some prisoners, came out publicly against the idea on Saturday. As Hashimoto nodded his agreement, Fujimori said: "We received today a great backing from the Japanese government for our strategy." For now, the two nations remain united. But the standoff with the rebels appears no closer to resolution.

With E. KAYE FULTON in Ottawa, LUCIEN CHAUVIN in Lima and PETER McGILL in Tokyo

KEY CAPTIVES

Among the 72 hostages still held at the Japanese ambassador's residence in Lima are diplomats, government officials, businessmen—and a brother of Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori. These 10 are regarded as among the most "valuable" for the rebels.

Morihisa Aoki,
Japanese ambassador

Jorge Gumucio,
Bolivian ambassador

Francisco Tudela,
Peruvian foreign minister

Rodolfo Munante,
Peruvian agriculture minister

Pedro Fujimori,
The president's youngest brother

Gen. Maximo Rivera,
Head of Peru's National Anti-Terrorism Bureau

Moises Pantoja,
Supreme Court chief justice

Gilbero Siura,
Peruvian congressman

Samuel Matsuda,
Congressman

Carlos Blanco,
Congressman

Fujimori (left), Chrétien and Hashimoto: a continuing role for Canadian ambassador Anthony Vincent



PHILIP CHEUNG/REUTERS



TONY RANZO/AP

Handing out flags at an Extravaganza booth: 'I get hungry for my own people'

WORLD

Flocking together

Homesick Canadian 'snowbirds' rally in the sun

ON ASSIGNMENT
ANDREW PHILLIPS
IN FLORIDA

On the morning of the big show, Joe Regan went out in his bare feet to collect the paper from his lawn in Largo, Fla. His friend Herb Heyes picked a couple of grapefruit from the tree outside his condominium in nearby Seminole. The temperature would nudge 26° C around Tampa Bay that day, with a light breeze off the Gulf of Mexico to keep things comfortable. As Regan, 73, and Heyes, who is 75, set off together for the Florida State Fairgrounds to join thousands of other, mainly elderly Canadians who winter in the area, they could reflect with satisfaction that back home in southern Ontario the high for the day would be barely above freezing and the skies would stay leaden and low. "But you know," Regan added after a pause, "as much as I like it here, I get hungry for my own people."

About two million Canadians are expected to visit Florida this winter, and most will be happy to put Canada out of their minds for the week or two it takes to visit Disney World or soak up a few rays. But for Regan and 400,000 other so-called snowbirds, who spend four to six months a year in the state's condo developments and mobile home parks, homesickness can darken even the sunniest morning. For a couple of days in January, though, they can get together and flaunt their Canadianness. Regan and Heyes were heading for the Snowbird Extravaganza, a unique event that attracted 25,000 people when it began in 1994. This year, attendance topped 80,000—and the fairground's vast parking lot turned into a sea of cars with licence plates from Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick, as well as wintry American states like Ohio and Michigan. Organizer Mark Simone calls it, with a only touch of hyperbole, "the biggest gathering of Canadians outside the borders of Canada, aside from wartime."

It is part entertainment, part trade show for seniors, and part organizing session for the Canadian Snowbird Association, the 100,000-member group that speaks for Canadians who trek south each year to winter in the American Sunbelt. Mostly, though, it is a rallying point for Canadians of a certain age who find themselves gazing at citrus groves but hankering for home. All-day entertainment is free, and features veterans of the old Lawrence Welk orchestra—the music of your life, if you are 67 or thereabouts (the average age of CSA members). Pastel is the fashion statement of choice, and anyone not paying attention in the crowded aisles risks a sharp crack on the ankle from a motorized wheelchair. Companies pushing investment services and immigration counselling jostle with others promoting retirement communities and vision aids. A clinic in Tampa touts treatment for varicose veins, complete with graphic before-and-after photographs.

Still, the gathering offers snowbirds more than comfort and nostalgia. The CSA has an impressive track record in fighting attempts by governments to cut back on out-of-province medical coverage—threatening the six-months-away lifestyle of many retirees. And, by default, it has become the place Canadians turn to when they feel less than entirely welcome in the Sunshine State. For the most part, of course, they blend in easily with Americans—but there are tensions. Floridians grouse that Canadians tip badly and clog up the roads (favorite bumper sticker: "When I get old I'm going to move to Canada and drive slow"). And last year, Canadian noses were out of joint when the manager of a mobile home park in Clearwater ordered a couple from Toronto to stop flying their Maple Leaf flag, or at least to fly the Stars and Stripes above it. Clearwater's mayor and the original complainant later apologized, but the couple never did put the flag back up.

This year, there is the Great Food Flap. In December, Florida's department of elder affairs issued a memo telling its regional managers not to serve foreigners free meals under a program that provides services to low-income seniors. The department says it used the word "snowbirds," which could also refer to part-time residents from the northern states. But trouble started when it was widely reported that one draft of the memo had singled out elderly Canadians as freeloaders. No one offered evidence that any Canadian had actually shown up for a free lunch, and *Le Soleil de la Floride*, a French-language paper aimed at Canadians living in south Florida, accused the state of discrimination. Finally, in early January, the department retreated: it withdrew its memo and said it was sorry.

But the damage was done, and at the



Snowbird Extravaganza Canadian expats were still fuming "In my experience I have never known any Canadian lining up for a free meal," huffed Hazen Walters, the 59-year-old treasurer of the CSA, who comes from Gander, Nfld , and winters in Port Charlotte on Florida's Gulf coast. "There's been some negative feeling. You get people saying, 'Those God damn Canadians coming down here crowding our highways and our golf courses. Now they're trying to get free meals.' Many, many Canadians were totally upset that they'd been accused of freeloading." In fact, the incident has had some positive results. The town of Panama City Beach, in the Florida Panhandle, decided to do something to make up for the bruised feelings and recognize the importance of Canadian snowbirds to the local economy. In mid-February it is planning its first-ever Canada Fest, complete with a Canadian Snowbird Open Golf Tournament.

When snowbirds talk about problems with governments, though, they are usually talking about their own. The CSA was born in March, 1992, after cost-conscious governments started cutting back on out-of-province health coverage. Ontario led the way in late 1991, when it reduced the amount it would pay—first to $400 a day for hospital care, then to $100. Other provinces followed suit, and supplemental health insurance premiums went through the roof. Instead of paying $600 or so for six months, elderly couples faced bills of up to $3,000 a day. Nothing makes snowbirds angrier than that—unless it is any suggestion that those who can afford to winter down south should also pay more for health insurance. "It's insulting," snapped Mary Stewart, an 82-year-old from the Toronto suburb of Scarborough who spends the winter in Lakeland, Fla. "We figure we've been paying taxes and went through a war, and there should be universal coverage."

Politicians in Canada take the group very seriously



Slinger: pushing medicare

The snowbirds' association is pressuring provinces to pay more—the same as they pay for hospital care at home. "That's what the Canada Health Act says they should pay," argues Don Slinger, the CSA's feisty 75-year-old president. "But they've been breaking the law—all of them." In fact, after being lobbied energetically by the association, Ontario's Conservative government put its out-of-province hospital payments back up to $400 a day. The CSA is now suing two other provinces' British Columbia, which pays only $75 a day, and Quebec, which cut its payments to $100 last fall. At the same time, it contracted with Medipac International Inc. of North York, Ont., for cheaper group insurance. As a result, a typical couple aged 65 to 70 can expect to pay about $850 for a six-month policy—considerably below what it cost at the peak.

All of which goes to show that snowbirds are not to be taken for granted. Ontario sent its minister responsible for seniors, Cam Jackson, to mix and mingle at the Snowbird Extravaganza and assure the CSA's supporters that Premier Mike Harris's government takes their concerns very seriously. Entrepreneurs are fighting for their dollars, and other areas are trying to lure them away from Florida. Half a dozen Mexican states put on a concerted push in Tampa to persuade snowbirds that Florida is overpriced and dangerous, and they should consider the charms of Yucatan or Jalisco instead. At Lake Chapala, near Guadalajara on Mexico's Pacific coast, some 10,000 Canadians already winter along with 30,000 Americans. And new developments in the Yucatan Peninsula are targeting the Canadian snowbird market. "The cost of living is a third of what it is in America or Canada," says Braulio Castillo, who promotes a condo project called Progresso on Mexico's Gulf coast. "You get a lot more for your dollar."

Florida overwhelmingly remains the destination of choice, however. But the market is changing fast. Those like Joe Regan and his wife, Evelyn, who dreamed of retiring to the sun and were happy with a modest dwelling in a mobile home park, are a dwindling breed. The value of those homes has plunged, people in their 40s and 50s are looking instead to pricier condo developments on the coasts. Those who study the market expect the next generation of snowbirds to spend less time in the south so they can keep working longer, at least part-time. Baby boomers, they predict, will want to run consulting businesses out of their condos instead of spending all day at the golf course. The Snowbird Extravaganza may well keep going—but to the tunes of Motown and the Beatles rather than Lawrence Welk. □

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World NOTES

THE TRUTH ABOUT BIKO

Five apartheid-era policemen confessed to the 1977 jail-cell killing of black activist Steve Biko and asked for amnesty from South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The tribunal said it would hold a special hearing in June to examine the role of doctors and other health-care workers in allowing Biko to die of torture and beating wounds. Biko's family opposes amnesty for any of the 4,500 people who have admitted crimes.

BRAZIL'S HISTORIC VOTE

President Fernando Henrique Cardoso won a major victory with congressional approval of a long-debated change to Brazil's constitution that would allow him to run for re-election in 1998. It would be the first time presidents, governors and mayors could run for a second consecutive term since the republic was founded in 1889. Cardoso argues that his economic reforms need political continuity to prosper.

TROUBLE FOR SADDAM

U.S. officials claimed there are serious rifts in Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein's ruling circle. A top military officer said Saddam had put his wife under house arrest and was frequently changing location to protect his own safety. Others pointed to a recent shooting attack on Saddam's son. The state-controlled Iraqi press called Washington's allegations "sick dreams."

PRESSING SWISS BANKS

Switzerland's U.S. ambassador resigned over a memo he wrote urging his government to "wage war" against Jewish groups pushing for a fund to compensate Holocaust victims. The Swiss government is currently negotiating with the World Jewish Congress over the fund in the wake of reports that Swiss banks still hold unclaimed millions in bank accounts of Jews victimized by Nazi Germany.

A DISSIDENT RETURNS

Natan Sharansky, a former Soviet dissident who is now Israel's trade minister, returned to Russia for the first time and visited his old jail cell. In the 1970s, Sharansky campaigned for the right of Soviet Jews to emigrate. Jailed for nine years as a supposed U.S. agent, he was released in a Cold War spy swap in 1986 and went to Israel. Sharansky, 49, said he forgives his former captors.



JILL MICHEL/REUTERS

CHECHNYA'S WINNER: **Former Chechen guerrilla leader Aslan Maskhadov meets reporters after being elected president of the breakaway republic. Maskhadov, a 45-year-old former Soviet artillery colonel, engineered the separatist rebels' stunning victory over Russian forces last August, which led to a Russian withdrawal and to last week's presidential and parliamentary elections. Under a peace agreement with Moscow, discussion of independence for Chechnya is supposed to be put off for five years. But Maskhadov, though regarded as a moderate, demanded that negotiations on sovereignty begin immediately.**

Rights in China—and Quebec

In its annual review of human rights around the world, the U.S. state department drew an especially bleak picture of conditions in China. By the end of 1996, the report concluded, there were no dissidents known to be active there. "All public dissent against the party and government was effectively silenced by intimidation, exile, the imposition of prison terms, administrative detention or house arrest," it said. Even so, President Bill Clinton, Vice-President Al Gore and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright all plan visits there this year.

The review also condemned human rights violations in such U.S. allies as Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Pakistan and Indonesia. In Germany, it said, members of the Church of Scientology face discrimination and harassment in an officially sanctioned campaign. In Canada, the report mentioned problems for aboriginal and disabled people, but also offered observations that heartened Quebec Premier Lucien Bouchard. It noted that his Parti Québécois government made "visible efforts" to calm language tensions after the 1995 referendum and focus more attention on the economy. Bouchard cited that bland statement to claim that outsiders who value democracy "cannot help but note that Quebec is one of those countries which take pride in respecting those rights, guarantees and fundamental values."

The O.J. jury goes back to Square 1

Just when it seemed that O.J. Simpson's lengthy civil trial was nearly over, there was a new snag. Three days into jury deliberations, Judge Hiroshi Fujisaki dismissed the only black juror hearing the suit against Simpson over the murders of Ronald Goldman and ex-wife Nicole Simpson. Court sources said that the juror, a woman in her 60s, had failed to disclose that her daughter works for the Los Angeles district attorney's office—which lost its criminal case against the former football star in an acquittal by a mostly black jury in October, 1995. An Asian-American computer programmer replaced the woman, and Fujisaki ordered the jury to begin its deliberations again.

The tempest at Altamira

A takeover battle rocks the fund company

BY ROSS LAVER and JOHN SCHOFIELD

Frank Mersch is fed up with all the rumors. "It's innuendoes and lies," he says between calls on his 70-line phone at the head of a cluttered, nine-metre-long trading desk in midtown Toronto. The "lies" are the stories circulating through the investment industry that Mersch, Canada's best-known and probably richest mutual fund manager, has somehow misplaced his Midas touch. For months, he and the rest of the trading team at Altamira Management Ltd. have been enmeshed in an angry, take-no-prisoners takeover battle for the company—a feud that has destroyed longstanding friendships and threatens the reputation not only of Altamira but of its principal suitor, Manufacturers Life Insurance Co. Ltd., Canada's largest insurance firm. As luck would have it, Mersch has just come off his worst year since joining Altamira nine years ago: his flagship Altamira Equity fund chalked up a 17-per-cent return in 1996, a year when the benchmark Toronto Stock Exchange 300 index was up 28.4 per cent.

Little wonder, then, that investors and large institutional clients are asking questions. Is Mersch so distracted by the takeover battle that he has temporarily lost his legendary focus? Mersch bristles at the suggestion. "We're trading as much as we always have," he says. Besides, "I never thought I'd have to apologize for a 17-per-cent rate of return. Yes, we underperformed the index, but it's still 17 per cent and it's the first time that we've underperformed the index. We're not God. We make mistakes."

But whether Mersch likes it or not, the star fund manager is very much a player in the struggle for control of Altamira. Last October, Toronto-based Manulife, which already owns 30.5 per cent of the company, offered to buy the rest for $32 a share, a bid that values Altamira at $660 million. Hoping to seal the purchase, Manulife had already obtained the written support not only of Mersch—who personally owns six per cent of the company, worth at least $38.4 million—but of 39 other fund managers, who collectively own 22 per cent.

What Manulife failed to secure, however, was the endorsement of Altamira's founder and chairman, Ron Meade, who represents a group of investors whose interest in the company totals 11 per cent. Nor was Manulife's offer warmly received by Almiria Capital Corp. of Montreal, which owns 30.5 per cent. Ever since, Meade and Almira have been waging a legal battle to overturn the Manulife bid on the grounds that it vastly undervalues Altamira. They point out that last summer, Toronto-Dominion Bank made an informal cash and stock offer worth $765 million—although TD later withdrew the bid. And in November, a Boston-based venture capital firm, TA Associates Inc., proposed a leverage buyout at $38 a share, or $784 million. Manulife insists that its offer is fair and is higher than Almira's own internal evaluation of Altamira.

This week, the warring parties return to the courtroom to debate the legal merits of an Altamira shareholders' agreement that Meade contends prohibited the fund managers from entering into a secret pact with Manulife. Meade and Almira president Eric Baker have asked Ontario Court Justice Donald Cameron to open the bidding to auction—a move that would almost certainly drive the price higher. "Our company is being held to blackmail and we will not give in to blackmail," Manulife chief executive Dominic D'Alessandro told *Maclean's* last week. He added that he resents suggestions that he tried to seize control of Altamira by lowballing minority shareholders. "Should I say, 'Wow, gee whiz, these people are saying nasty things about me—maybe I ought to give them a few bucks to make them stop?' Look, I'm 50 years old. I've worked very hard building my reputation. I can afford myself the luxury of having principles."

Publicly, D'Alessandro is holding firm to his earlier offer, while allowing that "anything can happen." In fact, sources close to the dispute say that the insurance giant will likely soon increase its bid in an effort to avoid further controversy that could harm the company. "What Manulife needs to do is head off the slow death, the court dates and the hearings," said one senior insurance industry official. "The impact of this fight on the company has been very bad. A company like Manulife has to be perceived as purer than the driven snow, and having all this stuff in the headlines is hurting the insurance field people. Manulife has lost the propaganda war and that's a pity because they didn't deserve it. But that's life in the big city."

If anything, the takeover battle risks doing even more damage to Altamira itself. Last fall, Meade told D'Alessandro that he would prefer to "lay waste" to the fund company rather than permit control to pass to Manulife. Meade later sent a letter to a shareholder stating that he made the remark "in the heat of the moment," and that it was not meant seriously. "I think Ronnie regrets a few things he's said," says P. Andrews McLane, a managing director of TA Associates. Still, McLane's own view is that the acrimony and uncertainty over Altamira's future is undermining investor confidence in the firm. "You have to be concerned if it goes on too long," he said. "I think the mutual fund holders and the institutional clients can only take so much. Pretty soon they're going to say, 'Let's go find some quieter, friendlier place to have our money managed, because we don't like this squabbling.'"

No one disputes that Altamira, the country's largest no-load mutual fund company, has stumbled recently. The total amount invested in Altamira mutual funds increased by 17 per cent during 1996, a period when the industry's average growth rate was 45 per cent. To some extent, those numbers reflect investor dissatisfaction with the relatively weak performance of some Altamira products, including the flagship Altamira Equity fund, the Asia Pacific fund and the Special Growth fund. But industry insiders point to a recent drop in Altamira sales as evidence that the takeover battle is hurting mutual fund operations and eroding the company's value. In December, industry figures show, the total amount that investors withdrew from Altamira funds exceeded new sales by $100 million. "Whenever you have any uncertainty around a company, it will have an effect," acknowledges Altamira president of investment Philip Armstrong, who owns three per cent of the company and supports Manulife's bid. "But these things go in cycles. We're happy with where we are."

What concerns Altamira executives more than the current state of its fund operations is the reaction of big institutional clients. Of the company's $17.5 billion in assets, about $8 billion belongs to large pension funds, such as the retirement plans for Ontario Hydro, the city of Saskatoon, Westcoast Energy of Vancouver and Interprovincial Pipeline of Edmonton. In addition, 29 financial institutions are investor shareholders in Almira, including the pension funds for Air Canada, Canadian National Railway, Bell Canada, McGill University, Crown Life and Molson. As well as having an indirect stake in Altamira, a number of those funds have money invested with the company.

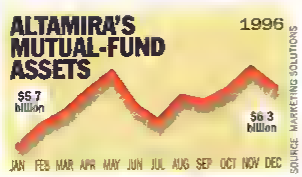
Last week, sources told *Maclean's* that several large institutional investors, which are being advised by the consulting firm Towers Perrin, have warned Altamira that they may pull their money out of the company unless Manulife moves quickly to resolve the ownership dispute. "People just can't believe that it's the best practice to keep a money manager who's constantly in the news," said one pension industry official. "Who needs it? There's a hundred other people they can go to." D'Alessandro, the official added, is under "tremendous pressure" to sweeten his offer. "There is no other quick resolution. If he hangs on, the case will go on through the courts for another year or two. He's got pressure on him internally to do something, and he's got external pressure because the firm [Altamira] is going down in value."

Frank Mersch is feeling the pressure, too. In Edmonton late last month, Mersch told a private audience of financial services executives that he missed out on the big jump in bank stocks last fall—a major reason for his fund's underperformance—because he was spending too much time with lawyers. The remark was intended, Mersch says, as a joke. "Sometimes I make offhand comments that I think will play well. But, look, my job is to manage money. I don't spend any time with lawyers. I don't understand their mumbo jumbo half the time anyway. All this hereto, therefore stuff—it's like a Shakespearean play." *The Tempest*, perhaps. □



PHOTO: SUE MACLEAN'S

> "We're not God. We make mistakes."
>
> —Mutual-fund manager Frank Mersch



Kicking the tires

A leading auto analyst rates the car companies

For two decades, Maryann Keller has been one of North America's most astute automotive analysts—renowned not only for her firm grasp of the industry's nuts and bolts, but for her blunt assessments of the automakers' problems. Last week, she spoke with Maclean's *Assistant Managing Editor Ross Laver from her office at Furman Selz Inc., a New York City securities firm. Excerpts*

Maclean's: *A few years ago, the North American auto industry seemed to be in a perpetual state of crisis. Are you surprised by the strength of the turnaround?*

Keller: There's no question the industry overall is strong, but you've got to be careful about the words you use. I was surprised by the speed with which Chrysler turned around. But GM is still turning around. And I do not think Ford has turned around at all.

Maclean's: *What are the problems at Ford?*

Keller: Their costs have gone up instead of down, and they're still very clumsy at developing new products. This is a company that spent six years and $6 billion to develop the Ford Contour. And by anybody's judgment the new Ford Taurus missed the mark in terms of styling—it's nowhere near as popular as the company expected. Ford's other big problem is the complexity in their product mix. Look at all their two-door sporty coupes: the Probe, Mustang, Cougar, Thunderbird, Lincoln Mark VIII and a new, two-door, sporty Escort. It would be one thing if the public loved these cars, but the truth is that nobody cares whether these cars continue or not.

Maclean's: *How do you rate GM?*

Keller: As an organization, GM has improved significantly. On the other hand, GM's share of the North American market has fallen from 35 per cent to 30 per cent, and it's still the high-cost producer in the industry. It has to come to grips with the fact that it has too many products that it builds in very small quantities. When you see Oldsmobile with the market share that it has today—I don't even think it's three per cent—you have to ask yourself, is it worth it? I'm sure that in time we will see the disappearance of some GM nameplates.

Maclean's: *Some people have suggested that GM, instead of going after market share, should aim to become a smaller but more profitable company.*

Keller: That's a loser's philosophy. Besides, GM's recent labor agreements include promises of employment to its workers. How do you keep people employed if your market share is shrinking?



PETER BREGG/MACLEAN'S

Keller: 'the truth is that nobody cares whether these cars continue or not'

Maclean's: *Right now, Chrysler is the world's most profitable car company on a per-vehicle basis. What is its secret?*

Keller: Chrysler is successful because it had a brush with oblivion and decided it had to change. For many years, they were in a state of denial about their problems with costs, engineering and quality. Sometime around 1989, they realized all those criticisms were true, and that if they didn't change they wouldn't survive. They still need to improve their quality, but I don't think anyone at Chrysler is in a state of denial any longer. I visited the Toyota assembly plant last week in Georgetown, Ky., and I asked how often their competitors visit that factory [to study Toyota's operations]. It turns out they had 300 or 400 visits last year and a very high proportion of those were from Chrysler.

Maclean's: *Is it true that no company in North America makes serious money these days building cars?*

Keller: The industry loses serious money making cars, and it doesn't make much money on small trucks. Most of the profit is in minivans and large sport-utility vehicles—which are so profitable that the industry makes a tremendous amount of money. On large sport-utility vehicles like the GMC Suburban, you're talking about a margin of $12,000 or $13,000 per truck—maybe more.

Maclean's: *Some analysts say the truck boom is coming to an end. Do you disagree?*

Keller: When you have all of these car companies adding capacity to build trucks, how in God's name is this thing going to peter out? As capacity increases, there will be surpluses that will lead to more competition, so the fat profits will shrink somewhat. But meanwhile, the public is showing less and less interest in cars, hence it's becoming more difficult to price them to make money. Within four or five years—maybe sooner—I think more than 50 per cent of all vehicles sold in the United States and Canada will be light trucks.

Maclean's: *Looking ahead a few years, do you foresee any changes in the industry that might surprise people?*

Keller: Number 1, I think fuel economy is going to become an issue again. Gasoline has been so cheap for so long that the issue of efficiency is no longer in anybody's top 10 criteria for selecting a new vehicle. My guess is that at some point over the next four or five years, we'll see the price of energy rising sufficiently that it becomes a factor again in the vehicles we buy. Also, I think the way we buy cars is going to change dramatically. There are going to be fewer and larger dealers, a lot more used-car superstores and a significant increase in marketing over the Internet. The industry's current distribution system looks just like it did at the dawn of the automotive age, with lots of little dealers all over the place. Not only is that system not delivering a high level of customer satisfaction, but it's also very expensive. The reality is that people will drive 100 miles to buy a car—they don't care who their local dealer is. So I think the restructuring will be rapid and dramatic. □



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Maclean's
WHAT MATTERS TO CANADIANS

Ross Laver



Personal Business

Sometimes, less is more

You get what you pay for, right? Often that's a safe assumption, but not when it comes to paying mutual-fund sales commissions.

The reason is simple: there is no hard and fast evidence that funds that levy sales fees—known as load funds—offer any higher returns on average than no-load funds, which do not charge commissions.

To say the least, this is a sensitive subject in the fund industry. Of the 1,300 or so mutual funds in Canada, about 60 per cent carry some form of sales charge that is intended to compensate the broker or agent who advises the investor. Most common is a front-end load—a commission payable at the time of purchase, ranging from 2.5 per cent to nine per cent. Another option is a back-end load or deferred charge, which can be as high as seven per cent for investors who redeem their shares within a year of purchase, declining to zero after eight or nine years. (Every mutual fund, whether or not it carries a sales charge, also levies an annual management fee, usually between 1.5 and three per cent.)

> **Investors often assume that load mutual funds are somehow better than no-load funds. Is it true?**

Investors frequently assume that load funds are in some way superior to no-load funds. The same kind of logic seduces grocery shoppers into believing that brand-name peanut butter is somehow better than the no-name variety. Why charge more for something if there isn't a good reason?

Good question. In the case of mutual funds—if not peanut butter—it's possible to crunch the numbers and come up with an answer. Last week, *Maclean's* asked Al Lauder, vice-president of Toronto based BellCharts Inc., a fund research company, to compare the compound average returns of load and no-load funds in several categories, after deducting management fees.

The results are eye-opening. Among funds that invest in Canadian stocks, the average no-load fund outperformed the average load fund in every holding period from three months to 10 years. Over one and two years, the difference was 2.3 per cent annually. At three years, it fell to 1.5 per cent, and at five and 10 years the difference was 0.3 per cent. And those figures do not take into account the commissions themselves. Assuming a five-per-cent sales charge, an investment of $10,000 in a typical load fund five years ago would today be worth $17,119. An identical investment in a typical no-load fund would be worth $18,262.

The same pattern holds true for balanced funds, which invest in bonds as well as stocks, and for dividend income funds, which focus on high-yield shares of blue-chip companies. But among small cap funds, which invest in smaller companies, no-loads did significantly worse than load funds. Over 10 years, the average no-load fund in that category had an annual compound return of 10.8 per cent. The comparable figure for load funds was 12.1 per cent.

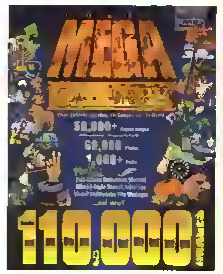
Another way to rate performance is to weight each fund in a particular category based on its size. Using that method, the differences between load and no-load returns appear more mixed. Among small cap and dividend income funds, no-load funds outperformed load funds over five and 10 years. But load funds had a clear edge among Canadian equity and balanced funds—although the differences were less pronounced after allowing for a five-per-cent commission.

In short, the returns from no-load funds are generally close to or better than the returns from load funds. But there's one more factor worth considering. Recently, a Boston-based consulting firm, Dalbar Financial Services, studied the actual returns realized by mutual-fund investors, as opposed to the returns of the funds themselves. It turned out that load investors earned more than no-load investors because, having paid a commission, they tended to stick with their funds for a longer period rather than trying to time the market. The lesson? Paying a commission makes sense in some circumstances, if only because it discourages impatient investors from trading too frequently for their own good.



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Business NOTES

ONEX STRIKES PARTS DEAL

Onex Corp., a Toronto-based holding company, became a major auto parts maker with the $845-million acquisition of the auto products division of A. O. Smith Corp. of Milwaukee. The purchase, through Onex's Tower Automotive Inc. subsidiary, will double Tower's revenues to $1.3 billion and give it the capacity to produce a much wider range of auto components.

BLACKBURN WANTS TO SELL

One of Canada's oldest and largest independent newspapers, the *London Free Press*, has been put up for sale. The Blackburn Group Inc. has also placed its two London, Ont., radio stations on the block. The Blackburn family, which has owned the *Free Press* for 144 years, did not set a price, but Conrad Black's Hollinger Inc. says it is interested in buying the newspaper.

CIBC SLAMS U.S. BANK

CIBC unveiled a $100-million loan program to help small business, while attacking San-Francisco-based Wells Fargo & Co. for proposing to compete in the same sector. The U.S. bank wants to issue loans to Canadian firms that submit applications for financing by fax and phone to a U.S. office. Wells Fargo is seeking federal approval of its plans, but the CIBC called the proposal a "Trojan horse" that threatens Canadian banking jobs.

HIBERNIA HITS LEGAL SNAG

Several of the major partners in the $5.8-billion Hibernia oil project off the east coast of Newfoundland became ensnared in a lawsuit just weeks before the massive drilling rig is to be assembled. The federal government and Murphy Oil Co. Ltd. are suing Mobile Oil Canada Ltd., Chevron Canada Resources Ltd., Petro-Canada and Norsk Hydro AS of Norway over control of an oil shipment facility they have built near St. John's, Nfld.

MOSCOW ON THE HUDSON

The Promstroybank of Russia—founded in 1922 as the Industrial Bank for the Soviet Union—opened an office in New York City following an intensive review by the U.S. Federal Reserve Board. The key challenge for regulators was to translate the bank's accounting statements to determine whether the bank could meet its financial obligations to U.S. customers.

Going for the Busang gold



The mine gate: the cast of characters keeps growing

Anyone who may have thought that the fight for the Busang gold find could not possibly grow more opaque would, of course, have been wrong. Last week, a freight load of mining executives arrived in Jakarta, each trying to capture the 100-million-ounce gold property Placer Dome Inc., followed by a teaming of Teck Corp. with Newmont Mining Corp., all now say they are in the running. Or would be, if Indonesia ever officially said that this was a race. But it hasn't. Government representatives did pass comment on Placer Dome. "We first have to be sure the company is a bona fide one," said Mines and Energy Minister Ida Bagus Sudjana, who raised questions about Placer's environmental record in the Philippines. It was Sudjana, in November, who ordered the coupling of Bre-X Minerals Ltd., which found and still controls the property, and Peter Munk's Barrick Gold Corp. Ever since, Bre-X has been trying to get the battle for Busang opened to auction. Last week, Bre-X was holed up in Jakarta too, trying to reach an agreement with timber tycoon Bob Hasan, who controls a rich piece of Busang and has emerged as kingmaker in the saga. Barrick stepped up its public relations efforts by retaining Luc Lavoie, spokesman for former prime minister and Barrick director Brian Mulroney.

A new Alberta network

Stuart Craig is on his way to becoming Canada's next media magnate. The president of Craig Broadcast Systems Inc. of Brandon, Man., clinched two Alberta TV licences, shoving aside Izzy Asper's CanWest Global Communications Corp. of Winnipeg. The federal cabinet brushed off CanWest's bid to overturn a CRTC decision awarding the licences to Craig. While Asper vowed to pursue his dream of a third national TV system, Craig plans to establish an Alberta network called A-Channel. The family-owned firm already operates the country's first wireless cable company plus TV and radio stations in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Craig's hopes of launching a new station in Vancouver suffered a setback, however, when regulators awarded the licence to Baton Broadcasting Inc. instead.

FINANCIAL OUTLOOK

Canada's gross domestic product rose by a healthy 0.5 per cent in November. A sharp rebound in motor vehicle production—stalled in October by a strike at General Motors—accounted for half the increase. The economy also benefited from a 0.6 per-cent rise in retail activity and record sales of existing homes.

The U.S. economy expanded even more rapidly, with the GDP rising to an annualized rate of 4.7 per cent in the last quarter of the year. Despite the brisk pace of growth, inflation pressure fell to its lowest level since 1965. Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan told the Senate finance committee that the U.S. consumer price index overstates inflation by between 0.5 and 1.5 percentage points a year.



"Even if the Canadian economy grows at a steady 3½ per cent annual rate between now and the turn of the century, we will have no cause to fear an overheated economy or rising inflation."

—Royal Bank

"While the loonie continues to be held back by concerns of the Fed [raising U.S. interest rates], it is only a matter of time before the convincing strength in the Canadian economy shows through in the currency."

—Nesbitt Burns



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A no-frills play on the markets

Call it mutual-fund mania. As the clock counts down to March 1—the deadline for 1996 RRSP contributions—fund companies are inundating consumers with ads. To maximize their returns, investors are urged to entrust their money to the market gurus who manage stock-based mutual funds. But there may be a better way. Investors who buy so-called index funds often beat the returns achieved by even the most skilled money managers. Index funds hold a basket of shares in the companies that make up specific market indices, such as the Toronto Stock Exchange 300 composite index. As the index rises or falls, so does the value of the fund.

Index funds have taken the U.S. market by storm. They have proven so popular in the current bull market that Fidelity Investments Ltd. of Boston—the world's largest fund company—plans to double the number of index funds it sells this year, to six. The interest is slowly spilling over the border. "We have started to see a pickup in sales," says Karl Schulz, managing director of Toronto-Dominion Asset Management Inc., which runs one of the country's largest index funds.

One attraction of index funds—which were pioneered in the 1960s by large U.S. banks such as San Francisco-based Wells Fargo & Co.—is that they generally charge lower annual fees than most other equity funds. That is because the companies that run them are not forced to pay high-priced managers and trading charges. Large financial institutions and pension funds in the United States were the first to jump on board. Now, individual investors are rushing in. In the past two years, assets in U.S. index funds have tripled to $124 billion. The Vanguard Group of Valley Forge, Pa., the largest seller of index funds in that country, is now the fastest-growing U.S. fund company.

In Canada, index funds attract less attention. Of the five funds available, TD Bank's Green Line Canadian Index Fund is among the best-known, with $265 million in assets. Schulz says he expects more people to invest in index funds as they become more aware of their existence.

In bull markets, even many astute stock pickers find it difficult to beat a market index. Over the past 10 years, a typical Canadian equity fund produced an average annual compound return of 9.1 per cent, compared with 10.1 per cent for the TSE 300, according to BellCharts Inc., a Toronto-based research firm. Index funds frequently underperform actively traded funds during bear markets, but since periods of rising stock prices are more common than periods of falling prices, investors stand a good chance of coming out ahead—provided they hold on to their index funds over the longer term.

Still, some observers question the fees charged for Canadian index funds. U.S. investors pay as little as 0.2 per cent annually, while in Canada the fees average 1.15 per cent. That's still a bargain compared with the average 2.09-per-cent fee charged on equity mutual funds. But the comparison does not impress Duff Young, a mutual-fund specialist with Toronto-based Midland Walwyn Capital Inc., who believes the fees nevertheless cut too deeply into the funds' returns. "The fees are so high that you are doomed to underperform the index," he says.

Another way of investing in market indices is to purchase Toronto 35 Index Participation Units (TIPs) or Hundred Participation Units (HIPs), which represent the shares in the Toronto 35 and Toronto 100 indexes. As with regular stock purchases, buyers pay a brokerage fee, which can be as little as $30 or so, but there is no annual management fee. Sponsored by the Toronto Stock Exchange, the TIPs and HIPs programs are financed from the interest earned on dividends paid on the stocks in the units. More than $3 billion has been invested in TIPs since they came on the market in 1991. They may be the best investment yet for people who trust the market more than any fund manager.

TOM FENNELL



PAUL SINEMUS/CP

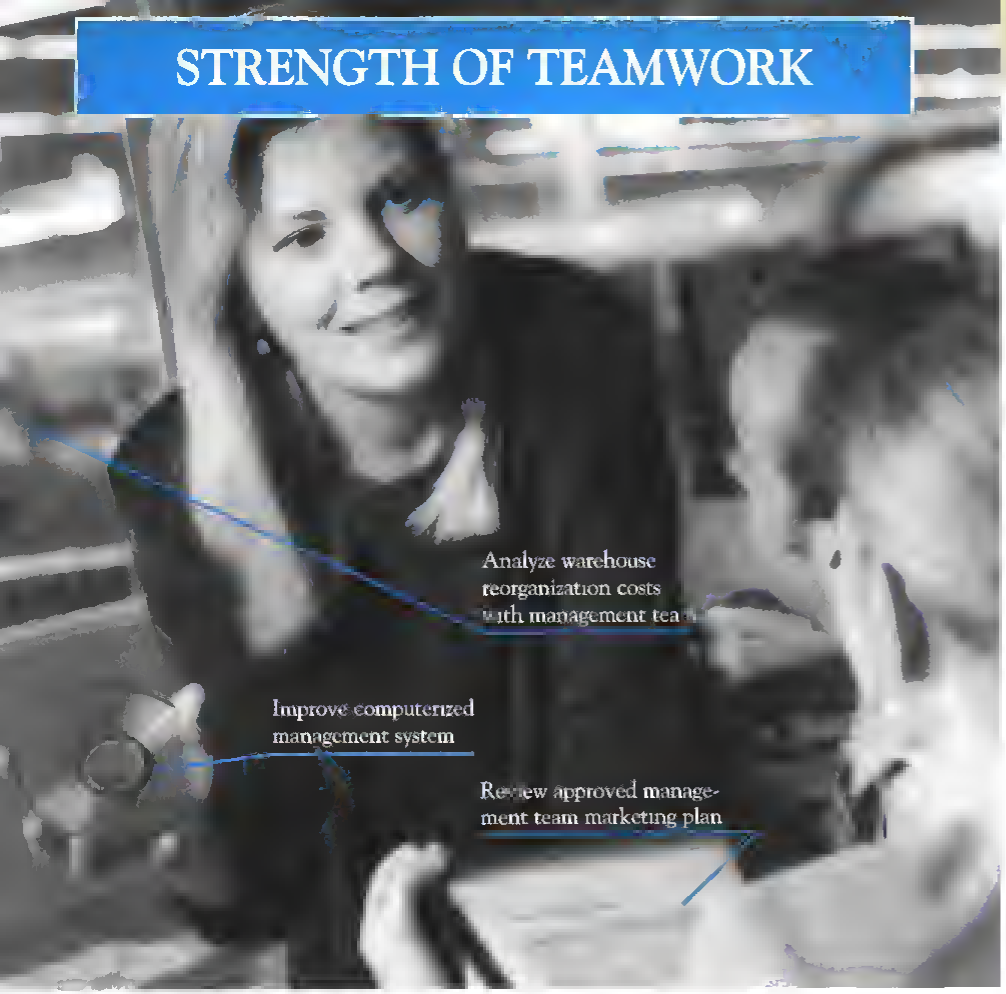
Schulz: investors who hang on for the long term stand a good chance of coming out ahead

CANADIAN EQUITY INDEX FUNDS

(assets in millions)

1.	First Canadian Equity	$265
2.	Green Line Canadian	258
3.	CIBC Canadian Equity	87
4.	Great West Life Equity	73
5.	NN Canadian 35 Index	25

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Peter C. Newman

Can Young tame the demons at defence?

There are many fancy theories about how the military mind works. (No, Virginia, that's not an oxymoron.) But anyone who has been under enemy fire knows that soldiers don't die for their countries, they die for their buddies.

It's the breaking of that bond of camaraderie and the shattering of the chain of command that now haunts Canada's defence department. Assaulted on all sides by its critics who rightly perceive an organization that at best is out of control, and at worst appears to be nurturing dishonesty and condoning mayhem—Canada's soldiers have turned on each other.

Doug Young, who was a reluctant recruit to the defence minister's post and would have much preferred to stay in his previous transport or human resources portfolios, realizes that what he's facing in his new department is not just a tragic lack of leadership, but a profound crisis of confidence.

At the same time, Young knows that he must justify—or dismantle—the department's gargantuan annual budget, which despite deep cuts remains one of the largest of any government department. Within its continuing fiscal constraints, Ottawa can't keep throwing more than $10 billion a year at a military machine that no one seems able to justify.

Canada was a small but essential part of the Western world's deterrent during the four decades of the Cold War that ended with the fall of the Berlin Wall, in 1989. Now, Ottawa must find a fresh rationale to maintain its defence establishment.

"My whole objective here is not just to rebuild the department, but to end up with an organization that has a realistic and meaningful mandate," Young told me in an interview last week. "We must field a military that's respected and respectable, but the present peaceful environment contradicts many defence policies still in place that are really geared to war making. And sure as hell the easy way out is not to say, 'Well, let's have a war.'"

> 'The people at national defence have to understand if they don't stand together, they'll get taken down separately'

Young is tough in his demeanor and abrupt in his discourse, but there is a rarely revealed sentimental side to the man as well. "When I was growing up at Tracadie in northern New Brunswick, a family friend took me to a local legion hall," he recalls. "A veteran who was there told the story of how, while in action somewhere in Europe during the Second World War, his best friend, standing beside him, suddenly was killed by German gunfire. The vet recalled the sense of euphoria he had felt at that instant, happy that it wasn't him. Then, he almost immediately recoiled, horrified by his initial elation. He turned to those of us listening to him, paused, and said: 'That feeling is something none of you will ever experience. I've carried that memory all of my life, realizing that I really don't amount to very much of anything.'

"I keep thinking back on how moved I felt that day in the legion hall so many years ago as I try to get the people at national defence to understand that if they don't stand together, they'll all get taken down separately. At the moment, they're taking *themselves* down. Their individual quarrels and the tensions among the three services is not helping their cause. I deplore such infighting, mainly within the army, based on all kinds of situations that I don't feel comfortable with. It's a question of people realizing they must help one another. If the guy next to you isn't doing his job, there's no hope for you."

Faced with internal morale problems that defy simple solutions and yet must be addressed without delay, Young decided to cut off the Somalia inquiry, establish a series of quick-action panels to advise on future directions, and freeze promotions. "I don't want the navy talking to the army and the army talking to the air force about how they're going to divvy up the pie," he emphasizes. "They must become more flexible in their thinking and realistic in their budgeting."

Like it or not, there are some mundane functions of nationhood that require a modern state to protect its sovereignty (or rescue fishers stranded aboard loosened ice floes on Lake Simcoe) and maintain armed forces effective enough for internal as well as external peacekeeping.

The dilemma in fashioning a viable defence policy for this country is that Canada is a profoundly unmilitary community. One of our best historians, C. P. Stacey, evocatively captured that truth when he wrote of Canada: "Warlike her people have often been forced to be, military they have never been."

Except in times of great wars, our armed forces have operated outside the mainstream of Canadian society. Still, the defence department is bound eventually to run out of new scandals and the shame of the Somalia murders will be recognized as an exceptional rather than customary event. What happened there is beyond excuse. But we will have to acknowledge that by its very nature the military must operate on the basis of nondemocratic decision-making structures.

Army commander Lt.-Gen. Maurice Baril, who heads Canada's army, recently made that point in condemning the misbehavior by some of his troops at a Bosnian hospital. "I'm not running a boy scout troop," he said. "I'm running an army. Sometimes they react like savages."

That being said, all navies, armies and air forces mirror the character of the societies they are sworn to defend. If the ultimate purpose of our military is hard to pin down, it's because we as a people lack a definable creed or even a set of common beliefs.

In the final analysis, our survival as Canadians depends on the will we can muster to protect our institutions, and that, in turn, will depend on how much we learn to value them.





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ARE YOUR KIDS SAFE?

BY BARRY CAME

COVER

She bears the burden of it still, more than a year after finally summoning the courage to reveal her terrible secret. So call her Carol. It is not her real name but it does offer whatever small comfort anonymity can provide. She was only 13 years old when it started; a five-foot, 95-pound waif with enough talent as a gymnast to compete at the provincial level in her native British Columbia. "It would not happen in the gym," she recalls. "He would offer me a ride home and then stop at his house and it would happen there." "He" was Wayne Andrews, then 29, a muscular, aggressive former soldier who also happened to be one of Carol's gymnastic club coaches. And "it" usually consisted of kissing and heavy-handed groping on Andrews's part. "I knew it was wrong," says Carol now, "but I thought it was my fault because I never actually said the word 'No' to him."

Andrews regularly molested Carol for three months. The incidents did not cease, in fact, until he left the club for reasons unrelated to his behavior. But even that did not bring an end to Carol's torment. For two long years, she struggled to come to terms with often overwhelming feelings of shame, guilt and embarrassment. "I wouldn't go to meets where he lived," she remembers. "I'd freak out. I'd end up crying." The pressure continued to build until, finally, it all came apart shortly before Christmas in 1994. "He called my house to say Merry Christmas to me," recounts Carol, who was by then a 15-year-old high-school student in British Columbia's Lower Mainland. "I'd been carrying it around for two years and I couldn't deal with it any more. I had to tell someone. So I told a few friends at the gym and they told me to tell my mother."

Carol's mother, of course, was stunned. "It simply never occurred to me," says the woman who, like her daughter, finds it particularly difficult to deal with the fact that Andrews was no stranger to the family. "That's what is really horrifying," she confesses with a mixture of dread and amazement. "The fellow would come to our house for dinner. In hindsight, you feel like an idiot." Carol's mother launched a complaint that eventually led to a court case. Last October, Andrews, after pleading guilty to sexual interference, was sentenced to a year in prison. For Carol, it amounted to a vindication of sorts, a chance to finally shed dark memories and begin to heal. But for Carol's mother, the unhappy affair left in its wake a disquieting concern. "My kid had all the streetproofing things they did at school, all the things you try to explain to kids," she remarks, before asking: "I wonder why it didn't work."

Plenty of other parents across Canada are experiencing similar anxieties, particularly if their children take part in programs where they come in close contact with adult mentors. Graham James is largely responsible for that. Ever



Sexual abuse 'is happening this minute in almost every community working with children you can imagine'

since the Western Hockey League coach was sent to prison last month for sexually assaulting two of his players, attention has focused on the yawning potential for sexual abuse in sports. Not surprisingly, the spotlight has fallen on hockey, with new scandals surfacing almost daily as those in charge of the game scramble to contain the damage. But, as Carol's case so graphically illustrates, the problem is not confined to hockey. Nor is it just within organized sport. What may be emerging, in fact, are the symptoms of an old malaise that stretches far more widely, and reaches far more deeply, than even the most worried parent dares contemplate.

That, at least, is the view of many experts in the field. Paddy Bowen, executive director of Volunteer Canada, an Ottawa-based clearing house for community-based organizations, goes so far as to "guarantee" that child sexual abuse "is happening this minute in almost every community working with children you can imagine. It is happening with Boy Scouts, it is happening in Big Brothers and hockey and soccer and swimming. It is happening right now. It is not every second person but it is also not one in a million. We know that."



CARMELL DAVIS/THE WINDSOR STAR

Warner: relief when an 'active pedophile' was sent to prison

If the accounts surfacing in public are any indication, Bowen may not be exaggerating. Wayne Andrews was only one of three British Columbia-based gymnastics coaches convicted on sexual offences during a three-month period late last year. Right now, three minor hockey officials—in Winnipeg, Calgary and Grand Forks, B.C.—are either under investigation or facing charges on sex counts. Nuns in Newfoundland and a former scoutmaster in Ontario face lawsuits arising from physical, emotional and sexual abuse of youngsters in their care. At least five adults have been arrested across the land since early December for possessing computer-generated child pornography, including a respected physicist in Ottawa and the bespectacled cantor of a Halifax synagogue.

The list goes on. In Ottawa, a former army cadet volunteer was to appear in court this week on charges of gross indecency involving twin brothers for whom he became legal guardian in the late 1970s. In Montreal, a 47-year-old day care worker with a previous conviction for sexual assault on children was found guilty of molesting two toddlers and ordered held in custody for sentencing. In Nova Scotia, the government had to temporarily suspend a program under which it had budgeted $33 million last May to compensate childhood victims of abuse at three provincial youth institutions. The reason: quickly swamped with 1,250 separate claims, it was "collapsing under its own weight," according to Justice Minister Jay Abass.

None of these incidents had anything to do with the furor that erupted when Sheldon Kennedy of the NHL's Boston Bruins unveiled his harrowing tale of the sexual abuse he suffered while playing junior hockey for Graham James in Swift Current, Sask. But the publicity the scandal attracted has clearly had an effect, directing the public's eye into some of society's darker and dirtier corners. Kennedy's courage in stepping forward has prompted others to do the same. In one of the more dramatic episodes, Larry Hendrick, a 41-year-old Edmonton teacher, painted in detail the sexual advances—and attempted sexual blackmail—he was forced to endure while a 16-year old player toiling for the late Brian Shaw, one of Western Canada's junior hockey legends. What is more, he told reporters that at least 30 of Shaw's former players had telephoned him with reports of similar experiences. "There were three players in particular who broke down on the phone," said Hendrick. "It was the first time these guys had told anybody about what happened to them."

Beyond hockey, the James affair continues to reverberate. On Jan. 13 in Halifax, for example, Provincial Court Judge Hughes Randall invoked that case as he sentenced Frank C. Hurshman, 41, of Queensland, N.S., to 15 months in jail after Hurshman pleaded guilty to indecency in a case involving a mentally handicapped boy who was occasionally in his care. "No doubt you've probably taken into account the way the press, radio and TV dealt with the story [about James] and the way the situation is viewed by the public," said Randall, in passing sentence. "The child was in your care, under your wing. And whether you're supposed to be building camps with him in the woods or coaching them as a hockey player, it's considered to be most serious and reprehensible."

Reprehensible, certainly, but neither rare nor particularly new. Pedophiles have been around almost as long as there have been children, and there is no shortage of them in Canada. In Vancouver, the police department recently disclosed that it has been searching for the past five years for the person who has been leaving obscene letters along a stretch of Cambie Street, not far from the city's downtown. Authorities have recovered more than 50 letters—some crudely illustrated, a few handwritten, most of them typed—recounting in salacious detail repeated incidents of abuse of young children. "There is such a wealth of information that all the experts feel very strongly that he has committed many molestations," says Const. Anne Drennan. "We believe the victims are children of family, friends, neighbors, kids that he has been babysitting. It's not a random thing."

Last November, parents in and around Halifax breathed a collective sigh of relief when Ernest Warner went to a federal penitentiary for two years after being convicted of stalking students at 13 area high schools. In court, the Crown described the 54-year-old Sackville, N.B. resident, incredibly a foster parent of two toddlers at the time of his arrest last June, as a self-confessed "active pedophile, strongly attracted to prepubescent children, males and females." Local police had been investigating Warner for five months, following the attempted abduction of a Sackville schoolgirl. Police officers told the court about Warner's driving habits, which involved racing "like a maniac" from school to school, then slowing down whenever he spotted students. When they arrested Warner, he had a stack of chocolate candy on the front seat of his car.

Despite the pernicious nature of the problem, there is a dearth of accurate data on the damage that pedophiles wreak. The Canadian Institute of Child Health, a nonprofit organization, claims that, before the age of 18, one in four girls and one in eight boys are tricked, bribed or forced into sexual activity by a teenager or adult. According to a B.C. survey in 1992, more than 20 per cent of Grade 9 girls reported that they had been sexually abused.

But those numbers offer only a glimpse of the problem. There are, in fact, no reliable national statistics, primarily because of the difficulty in gathering data about what has been, and remains, a hidden crime. Because child welfare is a provincial responsibility, each province compiles its own figures in line with its own definitions. "This has been a really big problem for us," complains Valerie Fronczek, executive director of the Society for Children and Youth of British Columbia, an advocacy group financed largely by the United Way and private funds. "It makes it difficult to prove if things are getting any better or any worse."

The most extensive national study on the prevalence of sexual offences against the young was the Badgley Report, published in 1984 by the Committee on Sexual Offenses Against Children and Youths under the chairmanship of Robin Badgley. It found that 53 per cent of females and 31 per cent of males have been victims of unwanted sexual acts, with roughly 80 per cent of those incidents involving victims under the age of 18. A related population survey concluded that three-quarters of the victims were girls.



DAN HOM TOM

James and Kennedy in 1990: some of society's darker corners

Authorities are plagued by a lack of national statistics



JEFF MACY/CP PRESS

Brown: campaigning for a register of pedophiles

Gordon Phaneuf, chief of the Child Maltreatment Surveillance Division at Health Canada in Ottawa, acknowledges that the Badgley statistics are now "clearly dated." All the same, he argues that they "still give you a sense of how broad the problem is." More positively, experts agree that old taboos surrounding the subject of child abuse are beginning to disappear. "The climate has definitely changed," says Phaneuf. "Many more children and adults are willing to disclose their abuse, ready to speak out about the experiences they have suffered."

Fronczek, of the B.C. Society for Children and Youth, illustrates the same point by noting that people were unwilling to talk about child sexual abuse when her organization conducted its first research into the subject in 1979. "If they did talk, it would be to say that they were sure that, yes, it did happen, but probably not that much, not that often," she says. "They would say it was an aberration and we don't really want to give it much attention. But as the years unfolded, it has got a lot of attention. It is an interesting statement on us all. There are things we just don't want to face. But over the years we have had to."

The James case certainly helped accelerate the process. Ever since the hockey scandal burst into public view, organizations dealing with youth across the country have been bombarded with inquiries. And the people in charge of organized hockey, in particular, have scrambled to introduce reforms. The Canadian Hockey League, the umbrella organization overseeing the level of junior hockey that James coached, hired Toronto sports lawyer Gordon Kirke to conduct a one-man inquiry into the game's ills.

Individual teams, meanwhile, have been adopting their own measures. Officials at the Sarnia Sting of the Ontario Hockey League established a 24-hour

sexual abuse hotline for its players. Farther north, the owners of the Owen Sound Platers appointed a respected local policeman to act as a "surrogate uncle" for any player in need of advice. Typical of what has been happening elsewhere in the country is the situation at Sask Sport, a federation of the province's 72 sports governing bodies. "In the past few weeks the phones have been ringing off the hook big time," says Noreen Murphy, the federation's sports development co-ordinator. "It's mostly parents, but I've had young kids call me too. 'What can we do? Where can we go? Who can we trust?' These are the kinds of questions that are coming out."

They are good questions, even if there are few easy answers to them. Jan Brown, the former Reform MP from Calgary who is seeking the nod to join the Conservative party, is promoting one approach. In a private member's bill she has placed before Parliament, Brown is attempting to establish a national registry of pedophiles, making public the names and whereabouts of anyone convicted of two sexual offences involving children. Brown also supports the use of so-called chemical castration—lowering the testosterone level, and thereby the sex drive, of offenders with regular drug dosages.

The governments of Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia have established various forms of screening to weed out potential molesters from any job involving children. And the federal government is moving along the same path. In 1994, Ottawa launched a national education campaign on screening and asked Volunteer Canada to head it. In the past two years, the organization has developed a screening handbook—a kind of how-to manual—and produced a video narrated by actor Al Waxman. But even the most stringent screening will not eliminate all cases of child sexual abuse. Volunteer Canada's executive director Bowen is among the first to admit that much, acknowledging. "There are no guarantees."

Perhaps the victims are in the best position to offer guidance. Carol certainly falls into that category, as, to a lesser extent, does her mother. "One of the mistakes I made was assuming that if something was wrong, my child would tell me," says the young B.C. gymnast's parent. As for Carol herself, now a 17-year-old Grade 12 student and still heavily involved in gymnastics, her counsel is more succinct. For youngsters, she advises doing what she could not do—talk. "If anything happens that you don't like, get it out in the open right away," she says. And for parents: "Listen. No matter how far-fetched it seems, check it out." It is probably good advice. After all, Carol does speak from painful experience.

With CHRIS WOOD and SCOTT STEELE in Vancouver, SHARON DOYLE DRIEDGER in Toronto, LUKE FISHER in Ottawa and BRIAN BERGMAN and SUSANNE HILLER in Halifax

A CAUTIONARY TALE

Five years later, the nightmare continues for Ron and Linda Sterling. Accused and ultimately aquitted of child sex-abuse charges alleged to have occurred at the day care centre in their Martensville, Sask., home, the Sterlings have yet to put their shattered lives together. They have gone from being the accused in a case that rivetted national attention, to the victims of a criminal justice system that seemingly went terribly wrong. "It has destroyed our lives completely," says Ron Sterling, who has been unemployed since he and his wife were found not guilty in February 1994. "We lost our home, our vehicle and our reputation." Now in Prince Albert, Sask., the couple lives off pension funds and a severance Ron Sterling got when he was forced to leave his administrative job at the provincial correctional institution in Saskatoon. With the cloud of Martensville hanging over them, even finding a home to live in has been a challenge. "It took us five months before someone would rent us a place," says Sterling.



CORD WILDONER STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Travis Sterling: police and public swept up by truly horrific allegations

Initially, nine people, including five police officers, were charged with 170 counts in what was said to be a child sex-abuse ring operating out of the Sterlings' home in the quiet bedroom community 10 km north of Saskatoon. Only the Sterlings' then 25-year-old son, Travis, and a female young offender were found guilty. But the young offender's conviction was later reversed on appeal. Charges against five others were eventually stayed by the Crown due to a lack of evidence.

Ron Sterling remains adamant that his son, convicted on eight counts of physical and sexual assault, is also innocent. He is demanding a public airing of what happened to expose what he says was a misguided prosecution based on fabrications planted in the pliable minds of young children by incompetent police interrogation. But current and past Saskatchewan justice ministers have steadfastly refused to reopen the case. Five civil lawsuits are pending against the police, prosecutors and the Saskatchewan government, including a suit launched by the Sterlings seeking $11.6 million in damages.

If there is a lesson from Martensville, it is that suggestions of sexual abuse, especially involving young children, must be handled with care and professionalism. The Martensville case rested almost exclusively on the testimony of children aged 2 to 9, with no corroborating forensic or eyewitness evidence. Dr. David Raskin, a former University of Utah psychology professor who has studied roughly 500 child-abuse cases, testified for the defence at the Sterlings' trial. "The interview techniques used on the children were horrendous," Raskin told *Maclean's*. "They put extreme pressure on the kids who initially denied anything happened. In that sense, it was the worst case I've seen."

There have been positive developments in the wake of the Martensville trial. One was the revision of a protocol used in Saskatchewan to guide police and government officials in dealing with child-abuse allegations. A key change now ensures that children are not interviewed numerous times. Another development was the appointment in 1994 of a children's advocate, Dr. Deborah Parker-Loewen. "Undoubtedly," says Parker-Loewen, "the Martensville case was a major factor in coming up with a more co-ordinated approach to dealing with these situations."

What remains a mystery about Martensville is how authorities and the public could have been so swept up by what were truly horrific allegations. Early in the investigation, an internal police memo warned officers to be on the alert for a satanic cult engaged in the trade of young children. Whatever the reason for such an extreme reaction, the result remains the same for those whose lives have been entangled with the Martensville affair. "In some ways, it would have been better to have been accused of murder," says Ron Sterling. "There is nothing worse than what happened to us."

DALE EISLER

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Youth leaders warn that an atmosphere of suspicion makes it difficult for them to function

COVER



Joice: 'The greatest fear all of us have is false accusation'

PHILSNEL/MACLEAN'S

VOLUNTEERS UNDER SCRUTINY

Out on the soccer field, the boundaries are clear. If the players touch the ball with their hands, they can expect a penalty. And on the sidelines, coaches are finding that almost any physical contact with young athletes carries a similar risk. "I'm the kind of person who touches when I talk," says Hew Morris, who has coached elite girls and boys soccer teams in Saskatoon for nearly a decade. "If a kid was hurt, I used to put my arms around him and say, 'Hey, let's get going here,' but you can't do that anymore." Now, if a player is injured, Morris calls on an assistant to help or to stand as a witness while he examines the casualty. "I make sure I don't touch them in a way that can be perceived as wrong," says Morris, whose two daughters play on his teams. "Today, if a kid says a coach did something to them—whether he did or did not—people will definitely look at him in a different light."

The chilling effect of sexual abuse extends far beyond a single soccer field in Saskatoon. The climate in hockey rinks, gymnasiums and classrooms across the country is changing as volunteers and professionals who work with children—from coaches to boy scout leaders and teachers—reassess their interaction with their young charges amid a spate of sexual assaults against children and adolescents. Last month's conviction of Western Hockey League coach Graham James for sexually abusing two of his players hit many parents with the force of a slap shot. "My little boy is 9 and he wants to be involved in hockey," says Judy Halliday, a Marysvale, Nfld., mother. "But we are too afraid of something like that happening."

In an effort to ease such fears, and to fend off lawsuits, many organizations are scrambling to introduce screening programs and police checks for those in positions of trust. At the same time, conscientious, dedicated children's workers are feeling increasingly beleaguered by the atmosphere of suspicion. "I've been in situations where I've had an athlete in my car," says Ottawa-area teacher Don Morris, who coaches his teenage daughter's soccer and cross-country ski teams. "You wonder, should I even be giving them a ride home? Everybody is starting to look over their shoulder."

Some experts suggest that parents' fears may be misdirected. "From the perspective of sexual abuse," says University of Toronto social work professor Nico Trocme, "it is much more dangerous for children to be at home than at hockey practice." For every coach or teacher that assaults a child, he says, "you have hundreds of fathers, stepfathers, brothers, cousins and uncles molesting their children." Statistics show that in more than 90 per cent of child abuse cases, the perpetrator is a parent, relative or a family acquaintance. As few as three per cent of cases investigated by children's aid societies involve teachers, coaches, day care providers and others outside the family circle. Still, many advocates insist that intensive screening is required to protect children from offenders—even if their numbers are small. "Sure, for every Graham James there are lots of hardworking, well-meaning coaches," says Paddy Bowen, head of Volunteer Canada. "But do you want to play the odds?"

Some sports organizers fear that screening may not only prove ineffective, it may drive away volunteers. Says Dave Hudson, an Edmonton businessman who coaches his 11-year-old daughter's ringette team: "You try to help out by coaching your kid's team, and they tell you that you'll have to go through an application process and wait weeks for security checks. It just isn't worth it." Like many volunteers, Hudson believes that organizations who long turned a "blind eye" to abuse are overreacting. "It's just like government," he says. "Make rules to cover 100 per cent of the people to catch the bad one per cent. Why don't we sensitize the kids to abuse and crack down when it is reported?"

Now, many volunteers are altering their behavior to protect themselves as much as the children. Scouts Canada is among the numerous organizations that advise leaders not to spend time alone with a boy or girl. "The greatest fear all of us have is false accusation," says Trevor Joice, a veteran Toronto scout leader. "What I find even scarier is that false accusations can occur 20 years from now. What protection does anybody have?"

But some experts say those fears are largely unfounded. "It is extremely unlikely a child would intentionally make a false allegation because they didn't get a badge or make it onto the hockey team," says Trocme, pointing to studies that show that about one per cent of child abuse allegations prove to be malicious. Sadly, the realities of sexual abuse mean that adults must find a delicate new balance between protecting a child and offering a relationship of trust. "I hope we are not entering a period in our society where we can't develop friendships with people who are 20 years younger or can't drive a kid home without feeling uncomfortable," says Joice.

SHARON DOYLE DRIEDGER

A former Sea Scout seeks compensation after his leader's conviction for assault

COVER

TRYING TESTIMONY

Robert Giroux can hardly bear to look at the black-and white photo of himself as a winsome 10-year-old suited up in his Sea Scout uniform complete with a scarf, sash and sailor hat. Sitting at home in the Nepean, Ont., townhouse that he shares with his fiancée and four-year-old son, Giroux, now 28, musters an outward ease recounting the memories behind the photo. Starting when he was 11, Giroux was sexually assaulted by his scout leader. The assaults occurred at the man's home, on his boat and while camping in the early 1980s. Small for his age and from a low-income neighborhood, Giroux was showered with gifts by John Adams. "It made me a very popular child in the neighborhood," says Giroux of the gifts, which included ski equipment and video games. In December, 1994, after years of keeping silent, he filed a complaint with the police and went public with his story. When Adams, 46, was convicted of sexual assault and sentenced last April to 16 months in jail, Giroux's sobs filled the Ottawa courtroom. "I don't think I can really express the pain and fear that I went through that first day in court seeing John," says Giroux.



Giroux, then and now: depression and suicide attempts

MIKE FINDER

It may not be his last trip to the courtroom. The Ottawa silk screener has slapped Adams and Scouts Canada with a lawsuit for damages. Giroux says his initial reason for launching the civil action against Scouts Canada was the debt he incurred for therapy sessions—three times a week "to deal with my depression, suicide attempts and medication." While he has met with scout officials to ask for better screening of volunteers, Giroux is bothered by the fact that no one from Scouts Canada showed up in court to support him at Adams's sentencing. Still, Giroux received unanticipated support in the courtroom from two strangers, Kathy MacLean and her son Mark, who sat beside him for the sentencing hearing. A former scout in Adams's troop, Mark MacLean, now 22, and a fellow scout had accused Adams of sexually assaulting them in the mid-1980s. Adams was acquitted of those charges in 1987, and with parents and boy scouts cheering the verdict, stayed on as a leader until 1993. Kathy MacLean and her husband, Lorne, contend that Adams, who was involved in scouting for more than 30 years, should have been dismissed. "They could have said, 'We just can't take a chance in our organization,'" Lorne MacLean said last week.

Warren McMeekin, executive director for the national capital region, defends the group's support for Adams, noting: "He was acquitted so he was reinstated as a leader." McMeekin will say little about Giroux's case because the civil action is pending, but he does say: "We're horrified. Of course, we are. We don't tolerate this stuff."

One of the oldest and largest youth-serving organizations in the country, Scouts Canada maintains that it has a very good record. Chief executive officer John Pettifer says he is "aware of" convictions of five leaders—out of 60,000 volunteers—last year for sexually abusing children in their care. Calling that "an extremely small amount," Pettifer says: "There are no organizations that are completely immune to that difficulty, and there is no way that we can completely eliminate that difficulty."

At present, Scouts Canada has no uniform screening procedure. Prospective scout leaders fill out application forms and most are interviewed for the job by a committee. Some scout councils conduct reference and police checks. The organization of Scouts Canada is developing new volunteer screening guidelines, but according to spokesman John Rietveld, even after they are approved their application may vary across the country. Decision-making in the organization is largely local, he points out.

Scouts Canada is currently preparing a video to educate recruiters about screening other volunteers and conducting interviews and reference checks. Giroux wants to see all youths involved in scouting and their leaders educated on sexual abuse. In the United States, the Boy Scouts of America shows age-appropriate videos on child abuse to members, their parents and troop leaders. The aim is to teach youths to "recognize, resist and report," says spokesman Gregg Shields. Pettifer says Scouts Canada's "finite resources" are being directed at making leaders aware of the problem. Until now, Pettifer says that Scouts Canada "really hasn't seen a need for reference checks. For the most part, leaders recruited to local groups have been people that have been known to the group."

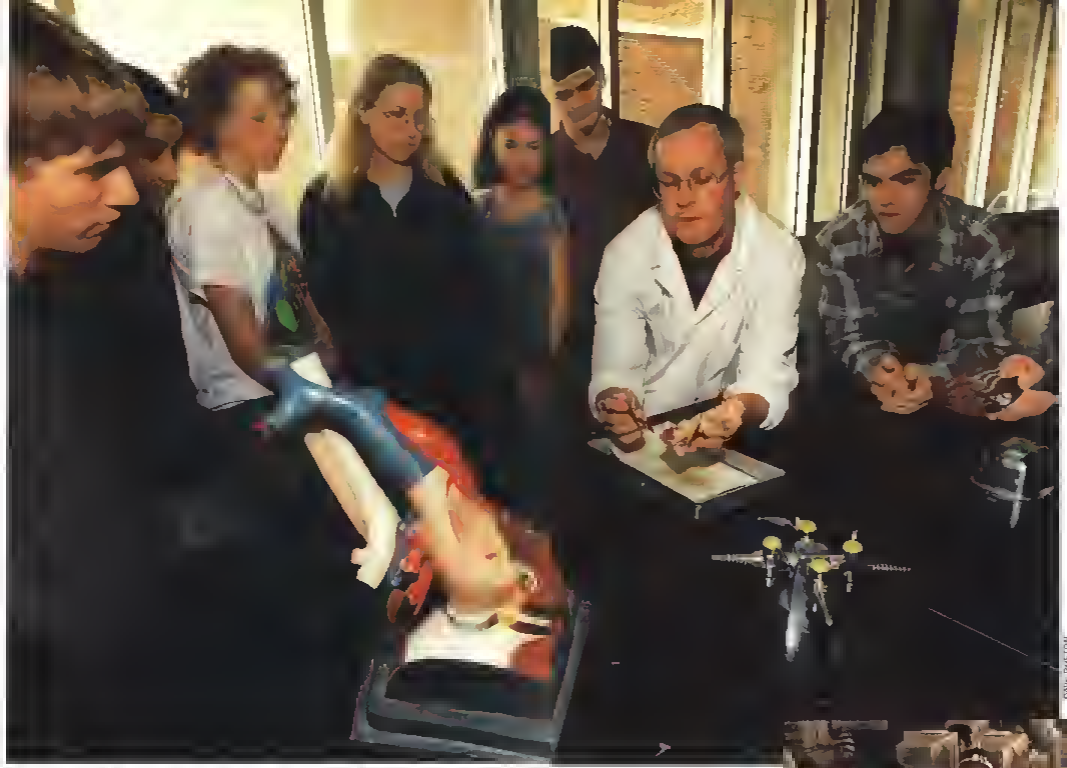
Giroux, meanwhile, goes on with the task of rebuilding his life. It is suppertime as his son plays nearby, meticulously lining up miniature CP Rail trains on the carpet, but Giroux says he has lost his appetite. The feelings have come flooding back since he retrieved the picture of himself as a scout three days earlier from his public school files. It lies before him on the coffee table. "I had a hard time dealing with it, understanding a lot of things again," he says. "It brought some really strong memories back." Clearly, they are ones he would like to forget.

BRENDA BRANSWELL *in Ottawa*

Measuring young minds

A national exam stirs a debate over testing

BY VICTOR DWYER



DAVE BOYNTON



RICARDO ACCORTI/SIBA

Webster with students; Korean classroom (right): a race to produce cutting-edge scientific thinkers

It is a community whose job is to teach—and grade—the nation's students. So it seemed appropriate last week when public school educators across Canada received a report card of their own. And as with any exam results, the final marks on a nationwide science test of 13- and 16-year-olds produced both jubilation and disappointment. "This is very gratifying," said Paul Webster, a science teacher at Western Canada High School in Calgary, upon hearing that Alberta students performed exceptionally well on the test of 37,500 students, part of the School Achievement Indicators Program (SAIP) of the Council of Ministers of Education. "I think it reflects both the commitment of our teachers and the hard work of our students." But in a handful of other provinces—particularly Ontario, the only one in which scores lagged behind the national average for students of both ages—the reaction was decidedly more glum. There was no ducking from Joan Green, chief executive officer of the Ontario Educational Quality and Accountability Office, which was launched last year with a mandate to develop provincewide tests of student achievement as early as Grade 3. "Let's face it," she said, "we simply did not do as well as we would have liked to."

But amid reaction to specific scores, the results reignited a broader debate about the merits of standardized tests, their effects on teaching and learning—and about what they really prove. Critics say that while such examinations provide one broad indicator of educational achievement, their attempt to measure all students with a single yardstick creates a false impression of how well schools are preparing pupils for the real world. Others welcomed the results as a vital check on the quality of public education. In fact, some argued that the SAIP test did not go far enough. Like the Third International Mathematics and Science Study of a half-million 13-year-olds in 41 countries, whose results were released last November, the SAIP test was designed to measure the success of educational systems—not individual pupils. Said Cynthia Bled, chairwoman of the Ottawa-based Committee for Canada Wide Standards in Education: "Every student, everywhere in the country, should have better feedback about what they are learning in our schools."

The science test, conducted in the spring of 1996, follows similar surveys in mathematics, held in 1993, and reading and writing, in 1994. Last week's results were based on a random sample of students, broken into two groups. One performed a written assessment consisting of multiple-choice and short-answer questions. The other conducted hands-on scientific experiments. In both cases, tasks were assigned at five levels of increasing difficulty.

The national team of educators who designed the test determined that most 13-year-olds should be able to achieve at least Level 2 on the scale, and most 16-year-olds Level 3 or better. In the written portion, the only part that produced province-by-province results, students at Level 2 were asked, for example, to classify substances according to their physical properties, and to describe how the movement and tilt of the Earth affects cycles such as years, days and seasons. Students at Level 3 were expected to know that some forms of life are unicellular and others multicellular, and to use chemical properties to classify substances.

In the test's practical component, 93 per cent of 13-year-olds nationwide, and 65 per cent of 16-year-olds, performed at the levels expected by the panel. In the written portion, roughly 70 per cent of both age groups did. But provincial scores showed a number of regional differences. Among 13-year-olds, most in Grade 8, students in Alberta, Prince Edward Island and Saskatchewan performed significantly ahead of the national average. Among 16-year-olds, the only province to do so was Alberta. Lagging significantly behind the nation were students of both ages in Ontario, and 16-year-olds in Newfoundland.

But beyond such regional differences, the tests also revealed another, more far-reaching concern. As a nation, Canada is producing only tiny numbers of students able to tackle the most complex scientific problems. While a national panel of teachers, parents and business leaders had expected 73 per cent of 13-year-olds to perform at Level 3 on the written component, only 63 per cent did so. By age 16, a scant 3.4 per cent were able to conquer the hardest questions—those at Levels 4 and 5. That was far fewer than the 13.3 per cent expected.

Such numbers are alarming, say many observers, because they reflect the country's inability to compete in the global race to produce cutting-edge scientific thinkers. A similar warning was sounded when Canadian students were outpaced by many other countries in the recent international math and science study. In that test, Canada placed roughly in the middle of the pack, far behind such Asian powerhouses as Singapore, Korea and Japan. And only nine per cent scored in the top tenth of that international class—compared with 30 per cent in top-rated Singapore. Those numbers carry a warning. "It is particularly in math and science areas that companies are running into skills shortages," says David Stewart-Patterson, senior associate for policy and communications at the Business Council on National Issues. "If they can't find skilled people here, and they can find them somewhere else, that is where they will put their money."

In the international results, Alberta, along with British Columbia, finished well ahead of the Canadian average in both subjects. And Alberta's repeat success in last week's tests is no accident, provincial authorities say. In a program launched about a decade ago, the province completely revamped its approach to teaching science and three other core subjects: language arts, mathematics and social studies. Along with explicit curriculum guidelines, which spell out what students should be able to do and know at various grade levels, the ministry of education introduced provincewide tests in grades 3, 6 and 9, as well as high-school graduating exams. "We now regard the assessment side of things as a vital part of the learning loop," says Jim Brackenbury, acting director of student evaluation for the Alberta ministry. "It's all part of making the standards and expectations as clear as possible."

That drive to state expectations clearly—and to ensure they are met—appears to be spreading. The other three Western provinces, Quebec and New Brunswick now have some form of standardized exams. And next month, Ontario will launch a series of examinations of students at four different grade levels.

The first of those will measure the reading, writing and mathematical skills of every Grade 3 student in the province. Following a one-day training session, teachers will conduct comprehensive, two-week tests, and then forward the results to Green's quality and accountability office. There, a team of 1,000 teachers will mark the examinations. In June, every child's report card will include his or her score. Those exams will include writing samples and hands-on activities in addition to more traditional, standardized questions. Says Green: "We want to ensure that the tests will measure skills that apply to the real world."

A long-held criticism of standardized tests is that they have not attempted to measure such things. And many critics argue that the secret of such educational wunderkinder as Korea—which placed among the top three countries in both the math and science parts of the international tests—is a school system that stresses hard facts over creativity and imagination. Beginning as early as Grade 3, it is common for young Koreans to attend after-school *hagwons*—cram schools that emphasize the memorization and regurgitation of facts. Such classes are the start of a decade of preparation for the intensely competitive annual College Scholastic Aptitude Test, a

The Science Report

Percentage of 13-year-olds who performed at Level 2 or better in the SAIP test:		Percentage of 16-year-olds who performed at Level 3 or better:	
Alberta	83	Alberta	78.6
Prince Edward Island	76.4	Quebec	72.6
Saskatchewan	76.1	Saskatchewan	71
British Columbia	74.9	British Columbia	69.2
Nova Scotia	73.3	Canada	69
Quebec	73.2	Nova Scotia	68.7
Canada	71.9	Prince Edward Island	68.6
Newfoundland	71.4	Manitoba	67.8
Manitoba	71.2	New Brunswick	65.9
Ontario	67	Newfoundland	64.4
New Brunswick	66.9	Ontario	64.3

SOURCE: COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF EDUCATION

9.5-hour marathon that includes hundreds of questions, and determines who will gain acceptance to the country's elite universities

Still, even as some test designers begin to include more practical components, some educators continue to worry about the effect of such exams on other aspects of teaching and learning. "When you focus too much on standardized tests, you run the risk of gearing your curriculum to them," says Maureen Morris, president of The Canadian Teachers' Federation. "We should be directing what goes on in the classroom to what is new, what is relevant, and what meets the needs of individual students and individual schools." Others agree. "There are a number of ways to measure a school's success—its relationship with the community, its responsiveness to parents," says Richard Gauthier, director of the French-language Education Policy and Programs Branch at the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training. "Academic performance is an important measure, but it gives us only one indication of how the system is doing."

In fact, many educators argue that across-the-board testing can often lead to real changes at the classroom level. In Ontario, Green's office has already commissioned a study into the educational backgrounds of math and science teachers in those jurisdictions that scored well in the recent international tests, with the aim of building on their success. When the 1994 Canadian tests in reading and writing showed francophone students in several provinces to be scoring lower than anglophones, the ministries of education in Ontario, Manitoba and New Brunswick launched a joint project, scheduled to be completed as early as June, to get to the bottom of it.

And in the four Atlantic provinces, which scored at or below the national average in the SAIP math tests in 1993, the joint Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation has since worked to develop an improved, common math curriculum for grades 1 to 12, now being piloted across the region. It mirrors a high-school physics and chemistry curriculum launched last fall, and follows the publication last year of *The Essential Graduation Learnings*, a document that outlines shared expectations for high-school graduates in all four provinces. "Our students are facing a national competition for university spots and an international job market," says foundation member Tom Rich. "This is an attempt to define standards that ensure we are offering the best education, and the clearest expectations that we possibly can."

As the pressure mounts on graduates themselves, it is almost certain that educators will continue to be pressed for clear, easy-to-read evidence that they are doing their own jobs well. At the Committee for Canada Wide Standards, Bled insists the next step is to offer every high-school student in the country the chance to take a national final exam. "Our graduates need the kind of document they can take anywhere inside or outside the country," says Bled. "They should be able to prove to anybody out there just how much they know." Short of that ambitious goal, teachers like Calgary's Webster were happy last week simply to take a few minutes to bask in the latest indication of their success—and that of their students. "At the end of the day, the goal of every teacher is to turn kids on to learning," said Webster. "It's nice just to be told we're doing something right."

With MICHAEL SNIDER in Chonju, South Korea

Strategic advantage

In the third-floor hallway of Humber Summit Middle School in North York, Ont., an unusual exercise is under way. Stopwatch in hand, teacher Teri Bowden gives the signal: "On your marks. Get set. Go!" In just 60 seconds, her 28 students must assess their strategic situation in a game known as musical chess—so called because they make split second decisions at one of 14 game boards before moving onto the next one. As the minute winds down, Bowden asks: "Where's the king? Is it in jeopardy? Have a look at it before you make your move." The analytical game of chess teaches problem-solving skills to Grade 6 math students. The use of chess in mathematics was inspired by the success of *Défi mathématique*, a series of textbooks co-written by Montreal math consultant Michel Lyons and his brother Robert that have been used since 1984 in many francophone schools in Quebec and New Brunswick. "Chess is kind of like Lego for the mind," says Richard Nadeau, a math teacher at Ecole Secondaire Etienne-Brûlé in North York. "You're actually building thoughts."



Math class at Humber Summit Middle School: 'Lego for the mind'

Certainly the North York board has good reason to give chess a try. Results of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study, released last November, show that Ontario students lag behind the national average in both subject areas, and Canada as a whole loses out to such countries as Japan and Belgium. Meanwhile, students at many of the New Brunswick and Quebec schools that have been using *Défi mathématique* have shown marked improvement under the program. A 1992 study of francophone fifth graders in Edmundston, N.B., showed that average scores on problem-solving tests jumped from 62 per cent to 81 per cent since the program was implemented in 1987. At Ecole de Sutton/Sutton School, a bilingual elementary school in Sutton, Que., where the program was introduced to francophone math classes in the mid-1980s, officials say Grade 6 students have outscored their anglophone counterparts on provincial exams.

The North York board was also impressed with studies such as those of U.S. researcher Robert Ferguson, whose book, the *Development of Reasoning and Memory Through Chess*, argues that the game improves memory, logic, analysis and concentration. And students appear to thrive on the novelty of the competition. "It's a mind duel," says Etienne-Brûlé student Michel Speiser, 15. "You can test your mind against your friend's."

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Dangerous dieting

Weight-loss fads can be hazardous to the health

It is the time for remorse. The spending and eating binges of late December give way to days of reckoning in midwinter. The bloated numbers on the dial of the bathroom scale, like those on the credit card bills, prompt earnest promises of reform—well intentioned, but usually doomed to fail. Guilt and despair propel Canadians by the thousands towards the so-called miracle diet books, many of them long discredited, counterproductive and even dangerous—but now resurgent in new editions.

Half of the annual list of diet books reaches store shelves in the first three months of the year, according to Helena Aalto, director of marketing for the country's biggest bookseller, Chapters Inc. And the publishers are catering to an expanding market. By the standards of Health Canada, 28 per cent of men and 19 per cent of women are clearly overweight, and the percentages have been increasing. Those numbers refer not to the merely flabby but to those whose health is statistically threatened by their overweight.

Nutritionists say the real key to healthy fat loss—for those who need to shed pounds to survive, as well as to those who simply want to look and feel more attractive—usually involves fundamental changes in lifestyle. This year, that discomforting message is vying with the miracle diet books for shelf space in the stores. In *Break the Weight-Loss Barrier*, Toronto psychiatrist Barry Simon and chiropractor Jim Meschino try to debunk the fad books. "We wrote the book to set the record straight," says Meschino, a self-described "wellness coach" whose chiselled features, muscularity and shiny curls could make him a prized personal trainer to the rich and self-obsessed.

Meschino, a biologist, says it takes only 24 hours without carbohydrates for the liver to use up all its reserves. "After that," he says, "your body rapidly breaks down its lean mass to produce carbohydrates." Worse, he continues, "your body becomes very acidic on a high-protein diet and takes calcium from your bones to neutralize the acid. This leads to bone loss and osteoporosis."



CHRIST MA STRONG MAGAZINE

Simon (left) and Meschino: carbohydrates are essential

Are you FAT?

According to Health Canada, people face possible health risks due to weight if a factor known as their BMI—body mass index—is less than 20 or more than 25. BMI can be calculated with a four-step formula—slightly complex but a lot simpler than a tax return.

1. Multiply your height in inches by .0254 to determine your height in metres.
2. Multiply that number by itself to determine the square of your height.
3. Divide your weight in pounds by 2.2 to calculate your weight in kilograms.
4. BMI equals your weight in kilograms divided by the square of your height in metres.

A BMI greater than 27 means you are definitely overweight; 25 or 26 is borderline, depending on factors such as bone structure and muscle mass. Below 20, you are underweight.

Improper dieting can backfire in other ways as well on those pursuing a leaner, sexier image, especially when they combine it with overly aggressive exercise. "I'm seeing a whole bunch of clients who exercise too much, don't eat enough and have become infertility cases," says Toronto dietician Susie Langley. With their food intake "not putting enough fat or cholesterol in their bodies to produce hormones," she says, the result can be impotence in men and infertility in both sexes.

And even while Meschino and Simon's book challenges some diet claims, Langley finds fault with some of its recommendations. "It treats it as a given that you have to take vitamin supplements, and many people don't need to," she says. And although the authors present a balance of behavior, diet and exercise advice, she adds, readers who use the meal plans without reading any text could be in trouble. "They're low in fruits and vegetables," she says. "They're not what I would give people to eat."

These days, nutritionists concerned about the hazards of fad diets are focusing on the popular high-protein, low-carbohydrate regimens, including elements of the best-selling *Dr. Atkin's New Diet Revolution*, *Fit for Life* and *The Zone*. The appeal of such diets, they say, is that they *will* cause body weight to drop precipitously. The horror is in the *way* they can do it—not by dissolving fat but by sending the body into a state of semi-starvation.

As Meschino notes, to find fuel to replace missing carbohydrates, the body begins to cannibalize its own muscle tissue. Eventually, the dieter quits, after reaching a weight goal or becoming disgusted with diet-induced side-effects such as flatulence or bad breath. By then, the body has lost much of its ability to burn fat, but none of its capacity to produce it. The result, when old eating habits resume, can be a rapid generation of fat in a body with debilitated muscles and—in extreme cases—weakened bones. But muscles are the body's real fat-burners, and their reduced size and metabolism make disposal of the new fat much harder.

Fad diets are too frequently based on seductive theories "full of scientific error," says nutritionist Zhaoming Xu of the University of British Columbia's school of family and nutritional science. "A high-protein diet is usually a high-fat diet, too," he notes. Meschino says the practical alternative is to turn the body into a "fat-burning machine" by consuming a balance of carbohydrates and protein—and dedicating at least 30 minutes a day to jogging or other "gentle endurance" exercise.

Co-author Simon, who looks reassuringly ordinary beside his brawny colleague, focuses less on muscle and more on the mind. "I want people to catch the feeling that's causing their action," he says. "It may mean understanding why you're feeling lonely, and doing something about the loneliness instead of soothing yourself with food." But while their common-sense approach may work for the mildly overweight, there is no fast fix for the truly large. "We have yet to find the cure for obesity," says Health Canada nutritionist Lydia Dumais. "So far, everyone is a guinea pig."

DAVID THOMAS

The Dieting Heavyweights

Last week's best-selling diet books at the 360 Chapters Inc. stores across Canada

1. **Fit for Life,** Marilyn and Harvey Diamond
2. **The Zona,** Barry Sears
3. **Make the Connection,** Oprah Winfrey and Bob Greene
4. **Foods that Harm, Foods that Heal,** Reader's Digest
5. **Dr. Atkins' New Diet Revolution,** Robert Atkins
6. **Armed and Dangerous—Fit, Firm and Ready to Fight,** Wendy Buckland and Barbara Nicoll
7. **Stop the Insanity,** Susan Powter
8. **Food,** Susan Powter
9. **Mastering the Zona,** Barry Sears
10. **Fit for Life 2,** Marilyn and Harvey Diamond

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WHAT MATTERS TO CANADIANS

Beautiful harmony

A visionary label puts Canadian musicians first

BY DIANE TURBIDE

A dozen years ago, violinist Angele Dubeau had just spent a day listening to live music at the Festival International de Lanaudiere, an annual event in Joliette, Que. She needed a lift back to Montreal, and a friend found her one with Mario Labbé. Labbé, who had brought the Dave Brubeck jazz quartet to the festival, discovered that the talented musician in his car was looking for a new agent. Over the next three years, Labbé became Dubeau's manager, then her husband, then her producer when he formed the classical recording label Analekta in 1988. "It was a classic story, the violinist and the impresario," Dubeau, 34, recalls with a laugh.

You might say it was a marriage made in music heaven. Analekta has since become the country's largest indigenous producer of classical music, and Dubeau its best-selling artist. At a time when most classical recordings—Canadian or international—sell between 1,000 to 2,000 CDs a year at best, the Quebec-born violinist racked up sales of 50,000 copies for her collection of lullabies, *La Ronde des Berceuses*, in 1995 alone, making her the first living Canadian soloist to go gold (Glenn Gould did so posthumously). And within 10 days of its launch last September, music lovers picked up more than 5,000 copies of her most recent release, *Opera for Two*—a collection of aria transcriptions played by Dubeau and flutist Alain Marion. Meanwhile, Analekta has produced an impressive catalogue of nearly 150 recordings—including the works of well-known pianists Anton Kuerti and André Laplante and prominent organist Bernard Lagace—and launched an ambitious marketing campaign in Canada and the United States. In both 1995 and '96, the company achieved sales of more than 200,000 recordings. "Canadian musicians play and are respected around the world," says Labbé. "But you have to export yourself in order to make a living."

Gaspé-born, 43-year-old Labbé—who, before Analekta, brought such acts as the Kirov Ballet and the Red Army Chorus to Canada—is just the man to put Canadian classical artists on the international map. "Mario is the most active, enterprising and daring Canadian producer," says Kuerti. "He puts to shame all the branch-plant operations, who haven't the slightest interest in Canadian musicians, except for a handful of stars." In fact, Labbé's main impetus for starting Analekta was Dubeau's treatment by one of those branch plants. The foreign-owned record company, whom the couple decline to name, had put Dubeau "on hold" for a year, promising her a recording contract and asking her not to sign with another label. Dubeau agreed, but at the end of the year, the company told her that it was no longer interested in "regional" artists, and suggested that she move to New York City. Labbé still fumes thinking about it. "Well, I guess the 'regional' artist has done pretty well," he says, citing Dubeau's total sales of more than 100,000 recordings.





Dubeau, Labbé (right): record sales and a marriage made in music heaven

Dubeau, who is practically a household name in Quebec, has benefited from her profile as a broadcaster as well as a musician. She is in the midst of her third season as host of *Faites vos gammes* (Do Your Scales), a weekly TV show on Radio-Canada that promotes classical music by turning the limelight on performers under 21, and by inviting celebrities who are also amateur musicians to appear on the show. Recently, Quebec Liberal MLA John Ciaccia performed a Verdi piano piece and Olympic speed skater Sylvie Daigle played Chopin. Dubeau is also in the process of forming an all-female chamber orchestra called La Pieta, after the name of the orphanage where Vivaldi conducted a young women's orchestra and wrote much of his music. Dubeau, who has performed in 27 countries and received an Order of Canada for her efforts to promote classical music, says that she now can choose her engagements, which allows her to spend more time with her four-year-old daughter, Marie. "I can let my CDs act as my calling cards in different countries," she says.

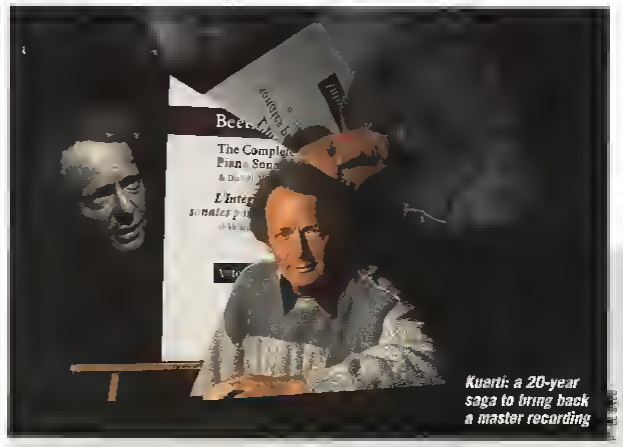
Until the arrival of Analekta, only a handful of the country's classical acts—including Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra, the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, cellist Ofra Harnoy and singer Ben Heppner—were able to get that kind of exposure, by virtue of their contracts with major international labels. But Analekta, the feisty independent, is insistent on getting music out to the marketplace, both at home and abroad—a problem that has consistently bedevilled other small classical music producers in Canada. (After Analekta, the second-biggest indigenous producer of classical music is the CBC, whose CDs are distributed by Japanese-owned Denon.) As Labbé points out, "You can have wonderful artists, but if you can't find their works in the stores, what's the point?" In 1992, Analekta established its own distribution arm to handle both its own and other companies' products. Analekta Distribution is headed by Pierre Boivin, former owner of the music-store chain Kébec Disque. In late 1995, Analekta launched the Fleur de Lys series in the United States, packaging 50 recordings with a uniform design incorporating paintings from the Musee du Québec in the provincial capital for album covers. To date, more than 50,000 CDs in the series have sold south of the border, and the company has since decided to use the same design for all its recordings. As well, the firm has struck distribution agreements in Britain, France, Belgium, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, Denmark and Greece.

That distribution network is available to both newer and established artists. In the fall, the Toronto-based Gryphon Trio released its first CD with the company, a collection of works by Haydn. Meanwhile, Analekta scored a coup in obtaining the internationally acclaimed Kuerti's 1974-1975 recording of the complete Beethoven piano sonatas, which it remastered and reissued in a 10-CD box set in November. The company is backing the release with a promotion campaign costing more than $50,000. "That's a huge budget," says Kuerti, "and to my knowledge it's never been done by a Canadian company for a Canadian artist." The set has received a new round of raves in Canada and abroad, and remains a Top 10 classical seller at Montreal's largest record stores, Archambault and the HMV superstore.

More than half of Analekta's total sales have been in Quebec. (In fact, Quebec accounts for more than 50 per cent of classical music sales in Canada overall.) Labbé says that sales in English Canada are picking up, but so far have been underwhelming. Even in the world of music, which theoretically transcends language, it seems that there are two solitudes. Labbé believes that the way for Analekta artists to achieve stronger sales in English Canada is through higher international profiles. "We are a Canadian company but, marketing-wise, if you want to sell records in English Canada, you're better off being international. If you get good reviews in the international magazines, or place advertising in the international edition of *Gramophone* or *CD Review*, then the sales start picking up in Toronto and other cities."

Labbé's other beef with English Canada has to do with the domestic recording industry's Juno Awards, for which Analekta releases have never been nominated. For the second year in a row, the company is boycotting the Junos, coming up on March 9, because it feels the selection process is unfair. Labbé argues that sales volumes ought to figure in the process, as a measure of the work's merit. (Currently, a cross-country jury of critics independently ranks their favorite recordings, with the combined tallies producing a winner.) Something is amiss, Labbé says, if his products can win so many Félix prizes—Quebec's equivalent of the Junos—while not garnering a single citation in English Canada.

Analekta takes pride in being able to maintain steady sales despite a major recession in North American music retailing. And Labbé plans to release another 28 CDs this year—including a Kuerti Chopin disc and Dubeau playing two Mendelssohn concertos—an ambitious program even in times of brisk sales. "It's a lot," says the ebullient Labbé, "but they're so fabulous, I can't bear to cut any of them." □



Kuerti: a 20-year saga to bring back a master recording

Beethoven reignites a pianist's career

In the age of the CD, digital remastering of taped performances is commonplace. But Toronto pianist Anton Kuerti's legendary 1974-1975 recordings of Beethoven's 32 sonatas have had a more eventful history than most. The tapes were subjected to not only a prolonged legal battle but also an intensive salvage operation that included, among other things, baking in a food dehydrator. Rereleased by Analekta in November, 1996, as a 10-CD package, the set has won accolades and, even priced at $80 to $105, made classical best-seller lists. "Modern technology doesn't always improve things, but in this case it has," says Kuerti, 58. "It's very gratifying to see that something with such a muddled history is alive again."

Originally issued by Aquitaine Records in Canada and Columbia-Odyssey (now Sony Classical) in the United States, the recordings earned rapturous reviews ("this complete set is, spiritually the most all-encompassing and convincing of all," said a Munich music publication). But by 1984, the music had become the focus of a suit by Kuerti for control of the tapes against Aquitaine's owner, Eleanor Sniderman. In 1990, Kuerti settled out of court, got the tapes and enlisted the help of his friend Jacob Harnoy, an audio restoration specialist and father of cellist Ofra, to repair the defective tapes and transfer them to CDs.

That battle is only one episode in Kuerti's idiosyncratic career. As well as performing and composing music, he helped found the Festival of the Sound summer music event in Parry Sound, Ont., in 1980, ran unsuccessfully as an NDP candidate in the 1988 federal election and taught music at the University of Toronto. He continues to write about arts-related matters in various publications, decrying in a recent commentary the greed, "monstrous gains" and esthetic compromises of the high-priced "Three Tenors" stadium concerts. "Something has to happen, emotionally, spiritually and physically, in real time, between those on stage and those who have come to enjoy," he wrote. "This is inconceivable in a stadium where it would be nigh impossible even to notice whether the tenors were just lip-synching (as Pavarotti has actually done in the past) to their own CDs."

Kuerti, who lives in Toronto with his cellist wife, Kristine Bogyo, and two sons, Julian, 20, and Rafael, 16, spends about one-third of his time on tour. This season's bookings will take him to Germany, France, Italy, Hawaii and Brazil, as well as major cities in the United States. And this summer, he is scheduled for a major performance at Quebec's Festival International de Lanaudière.

Meanwhile, the renowned pianist has continued to add to his discography, releasing six CDs on various labels since the fall of 1995. This year, Analekta will issue two new Kuerti recordings, of Chopin and Schumann. Often described as underappreciated, Anton Kuerti is experiencing a boom—with a little help from Beethoven and a Montreal record company.

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Books



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Canadians at Vimy Ridge: birthplace of the modern world.

End of the innocence

Two books revisit the trauma of the Great War

BACK TO THE FRONT
By Stephen O'Shea
(Douglas & McIntyre, 205 pages, $28.95)

THE BICKERSTETH DIARIES, 1914-1918
Edited by John Bickersteth
(Vanwell, 332 pages, $52.50)



In *Back to the Front*, his engaging book about walking the old killing grounds of the First World War, Stephen O'Shea recounts a story that captures the now scarcely credible innocence with which Europe went to war in 1914. He describes how early in the conflict—before it had settled into the murderous stalemate of trench warfare—a British officer told a sergeant to post four lookouts to watch for the German army, which was advancing through Belgium. Later, the officer discovered that the sergeant had posted only three. Asked to explain his lapse, the soldier said he had judged a fourth guard unnecessary. "The enemy would hardly come from that direction," he explained, "it's private property."

Four years and 10 million dead later, the cozy, moralistic view behind those words had been shattered forever. If the modern world had a single birthplace, it was in the bloodbath of the trenches. Men signed up in a fervor of patriotism, with the conviction that God was on their side. But by the war's end, thousands of disillusioned survivors carried their cynicism like an acid into the heart of society, where it rapidly created a revolution in everything from moral standards to art and literature. O'Shea, a Canadian journalist working in Paris, sees himself as an inheritor of the postwar sensibility. His Irish grandfathers had fought in the British army, and although both survived, they inculcated the family with, as O'Shea puts it, "a family animus [to militarism] that verged on the fanatical." Yet he himself had always felt remote from the Great War until, early in the 1980s, he made a trip to the scene of one of the battles and was moved by the scars still visible in the landscape. Over the next 10 years, he slipped away from Paris whenever he could to hike along the sinuous line of the trenches, which stretched 750 km from the Belgian coast to Switzerland.

Back to the Front is an account of that journey, enhanced by O'Shea's wide and varied reading in the period's military and cultural history. It is extraordinarily fresh and well-written, animated by the author's caustic in-

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BOOKS

telligence and his tireless outrage against generals who, as he sees it, threw away the lives of thousands in pointless open-ground attacks against artillery and machine-guns (in the 1916 Battle of the Somme, 20,000 in the British army lost their lives in a few hours). O'Shea is hardly the first to make this criticism. But what is most compelling about his re-creations of the great battles is the way he interweaves them with the landscape of today. Everywhere he looks, O'Shea discovers absurdity, as though the assembly-line slaughter had undermined the meaningfulness of human life right down to the present. On the same ground where thousands died the regimented tedium of suburbia plods on as, "family men stand in their plot of no man's land, washing their cars in the driveways of model homes that resemble oversized shoe boxes topped with steep circumflex accents. It is Sunday morning and this is purgatory."

Nothing could be further from O'Shea's bitter, often mordantly funny narrative than *The Bickersteth Diaries*. The writer is Ella Bickersteth, the wife of a Church of England canon, four of whose six sons served on the Western Front. Two of them—Julian, an Anglican chaplain, and Burgon, a cavalry officer and machine-gunner—were indefatigable correspondents. Their letters, incorporated into the diary by their mother, form the bulk of this fascinating view of life in the trenches.

The Bickersteths were very much an Establishment family, who entered the war out of a vigorous sense of duty, and a corresponding hatred of "the Boche." But after only a year of burying the dead, accompanying deserters to their executions, and attempting to comfort shell-shocked, ruined men, Julian lamented: "The whole thing is utterly devilish and the work of all the demons of hell. It will take generations to eradicate the evils done to civilization by it. I feel that our whole moral outlook is being systematically lowered."

Burgon was also revolted and yet, at the same time, he could not entirely suppress his youthful exuberance at the great adventure. In 1918, when the Germans finally broke and ran, he enthusiastically described how, as his unit gave chase on horseback, "tanks by the score were snorting along beside the cavalry." A great admirer of the Canadian troops he met, Burgon emigrated to Canada after the war. For 26 years, he served as a popular and highly effective warden of Hart House at the University of Toronto. Largely as a result of their war experiences, both brothers became socialists. And when he retired to England in 1947, Burgon began a second career visiting prisoners. Unlike many too broken or bitter to care, the Bickersteths salvaged something of their Christian idealism from the conflict. But as with O'Shea's soldier grandfathers, their trust in the established order had been broken for good.

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People

Edited by
BARBARA WICKENS



Twain: best-selling female country singer

Winners—again

Canadian women continue their conquest of the pop-music world. At last week's American Music Awards in Los Angeles—honoring winners picked by about 20,000 U.S. listeners from a list of top-selling nominees—they triumphed in several top categories. Ottawa rocker **Alanis Morissette** won in two: her 20-million-selling *Jagged Little Pill* was named favorite album, and she took the prize for favorite female artist. Morissette, 22, who has also received two nominations for the Feb. 26 Grammys and two nominations for the March 9 Junos, was on vacation in India and did not pick up her statues. But Timmins, Ont., native **Shania Twain** attended—and was clearly elated at being named best female country artist. Twain, 31, whose 1995 recording *The Woman in Me* has become the world's best-selling album by a female country music singer, declared: "If anybody ever tells you that this gets old—it never does."



Harrison on location; Howard, Harrison, Tripplehorn (inset): gruelling

Back to the bayou

In 1969, **John Kent Harrison** and his high-school friend **John Tamblyn** were looking for an adventure, so they paddled a canoe 2,200 miles in 70 days, from their native London, Ont., to Baton Rouge, La. Harrison, now 50 and a Los Angeles-based director and screenwriter, says memories of the journey down the Wabash, Ohio and Mississippi rivers—and their friendly reception by the governor of Louisiana—are still vivid. So when executives at the Hallmark Hall of Fame asked him to direct their most ambitious made-for-television movie ever, an adaptation of **William Faulkner**'s *Old Man*, about the Mississippi flood of 1927, Harrison knew exactly where he wanted to film it—Alligator Bayou near Baton Rouge. To commemorate his return 27 years later, Lt.-Gov. **Kathleen Blanco** also flew Tamblyn to Louisiana. Then, it was on to the gruelling 25-day shoot in the steaming bayou, complete with a herpetologist to keep alligators and poisonous water moccasins from attacking stars **Jeanne Tripplehorn** and **Arliss Howard** and the rest of the cast and crew as they worked in and on the swamp water. "I don't know which was more difficult, the canoe trip or the shoot," muses Harrison. "I think the shoot."



Bowen: amateur sleuthing

Savvy in Saskatchewan

According to **Gail Bowen**, the success of her award-winning Joanne Kilbourn mystery novels is partly a fluke. Although Bowen, 54, an English professor at the University of Regina, is happily married, her heroine is a forty-something single mother and journalism prof. It was Bowen's good fortune that many mystery readers are middle-aged women. They have identified with Kilbourn as she juggles family, career and amateur sleuthing over five books, including the most recent, *A Killing Spring*. And now, Toronto-based Shaftesbury Films is turning her novels into a series of made-for-TV movies, starring London, Ont., native **Kate Nelligan**. Says Bowen: "If I had sat down and made calculated decisions, I could not have done better."

Canning the Cosby confession

Many of his fans have long considered **Bill Cosby** the all-American dad. He has presided over two TV sitcom families as a benign patriarch. And in real life, Cosby has been married to his wife, **Camille**, for 33 years, and was the proud father of four daughters and one son, **Ennis**. But in recent weeks, Cosby, 59, has become the star attraction in a grim soap opera. Soon after the still-unsolved Jan. 16 murder of Ennis Cosby, 27, in Los Angeles, a woman publicly claimed that she was the senior Cosby's illegitimate daughter. To clear the air, Cosby called CBS News anchor **Dan Rather** and, during a two-hour interview, admitted that he had had an affair with the woman's mother 23 years ago, but denied he was the father of her daughter. Last week, CBS doled out snippets of the interview, but after the tabloids ran rampant with it, the network announced it would not broadcast a longer segment on *60 Minutes* as planned. With a straight face, CBS News president **Andrew Heyward** explained: "Unfortunately, the story has taken on a rather unseemly life of its own."



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Films

Reinforcing the Force

Star Wars transformed movies, and now it's back

BY BRIAN D. JOHNSON

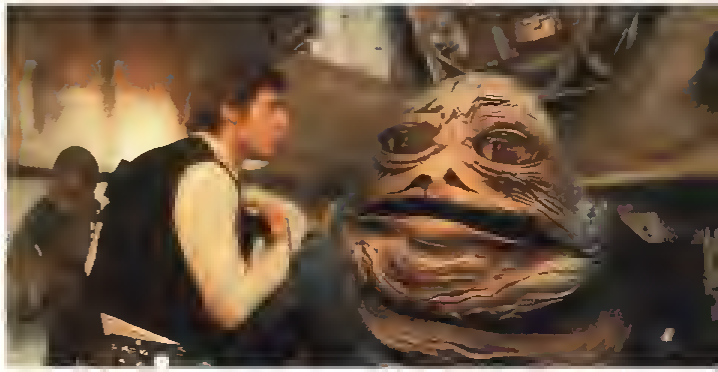
It is a movie that changed the movies When George Lucas unleashed *Star Wars* on the world 20 years ago, he ushered in the biggest revolution in the medium since black and white gave way to color It is the movie that introduced the age of the special-effects action extravaganza, which has become Hollywood's most commercial staple It brought the video-arcade esthetic to the big screen, the lust for light-speed stimulus And it redefined Hollywood's drive for world domination. Having a hit—or even a megahit—is no longer enough The goal of any self-respecting blockbuster is to *procreate*, to colonize the known universe with sequels, burger promotions, toys, books, video games—to build a franchise that will replicate itself like a runaway virus with galactic ambitions.

The numbers are astronomical *Star Wars* and its two sequels, *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980) and *Return of the Jedi* (1983), have grossed about $1 7 billion in worldwide box-office sales. Merchandising revenues are estimated at more than $4 billion This month, digitally enhanced versions of all three movies are being released in theatres, separately, under the exalted title *Star Wars Trilogy Special Edition* After spending $13 million on tweaking some of the original special effects, and about $25 million on promotion, 20th Century Fox stands to gross at least $100 million And the *Special Edition* doubles as a vast marketing campaign for a new trilogy of *Star Wars* films—prequels to the original—that are due for completion in 1999, 2001 and 2003

Star Wars, in which the faith and ingenuity of the Force conquers the brute technology of the Empire, is now an empire in its own right. With his special-effects company, Industrial Light and Magic, Lucas has become the Bill Gates of cinematic technology In turning movies into rides and rides into movies, he has taken the theme-parking of American culture to new heights

Now, with the "special edition" label, Lucas gilds the whole *Star Wars* franchise with a sense of literary permanence So, how does the original movie hold up 20 years after its release?

Surprisingly well The effects are still dramatically effective And although the film is one of the most contrived, ramshackle stories ever told, its essential innocence now seems more luminous than ever—especially considering the cynicism of action movies today *Star Wars* is blissfully unironic And the time-capsule cast is a hoot Mark Hamill as the ingenuous Luke Skywalker, the saucer-eyed Carrie Fisher playing Princess Leia as a diva-in-distress, Harrison Ford looking shockingly young and loose as buccaneer Han Solo, and Alec Guinness, as Obi-Wan Kenobi, a thespian zen master among the Hollywood neophytes





Ford; Fisher, Hamill (left): introducing the age of the special-effects extravaganza

Watching *Star Wars* again is like being bombarded by flashes of deja vu, but not just because it's a faded memory The movie itself is a pastiche of older movies—the basic scenario is the stuff of a John Ford western, the Jedi Knights were inspired by Akira Kurosawa's *The Hidden Fortress*; the desert on Luke's planet recalls *Lawrence of Arabia*, and the android C-3PO is the Tin Man from *The Wizard of Oz*, doing Laurel and Hardy schtick with R2-D2, the mascot mutt that beeps instead of barks.

Lucas hails from the first generation of directors who learned their craft in film school, and who tend to make movies about other movies But he also steeped himself in theories of mythology to write *Star Wars* And out of all the scavenged archetypes, he forged a fresh template, an earnest hybrid of medieval magic and sci-fi machinery—druids and 'droids.

Of course, *Star Wars* now seems doubly familiar because it contains the future as well as the past. Lucas may have borrowed the notion of precision bombing runs from a Fifties war movie, *The Dam Busters* But *Independence Day* stole from *Star Wars*—notably in its dogfight scenes of a fighter pilot finding a chink in an alien mother ship and threading the needle through labyrinthine canyons In fact, *Independence Day* producer Dean Devlin has called *Star Wars* "the *Sergeant Pepper*" of movies, the film that changed his life

Independence Day is unlikely to change anyone's life As effects technology evolves, the action movie seems to be devolving, moving towards a kind of brain-dead barbarism Last year, it was *Independence Day* and *Twister* This year, *Dante's Peak* and *Volcano* deliver another course of mass destruction In retrospect, *Star Wars* seems quaintly naive. The violence is benign The accent is on speed, not pyrotechnics And as a kids' movie, it offers a nifty fable of fathers and sons, within a secular parable about rebel consciousness prevailing over military muscle

It has been said that Lucas—when he was the young outsider pitching *Star Wars* to a skeptical studio system—saw the Evil Empire as Hollywood itself Now that he is the Empire, master of an ever-expanding universe, the collective consciousness of the Force is now a collectible And at this rate, the Force may be with us for a long time to come □



Allan Fotheringham

The world's best country hides its light



ROY PETERSON

Let's see if we can get this straight. In the country that the United Nations says is the best country in the world in which to live, the high judge who is chairman of the Somalia inquiry reduces himself to getting into a shouting match with the acting chief of the defence staff who issues a Popeye assertion—I yam what I yam—and says he will do it again. Oh boy.

The taxpayers will be dinged $300,000 for the cost of military helicopters that had to rescue 300 ice fishermen from Lake Simcoe floes that had been separated from shore by high winds. It is explained that this is a weekend sport of men who like to drink and get away from their wives. Many of them are detected, after being "rescued," sneaking back to their huts.

In honor of the heirs of Florence Nightingale, the sacred Red Cross—after a high court judge has spent three years and $14 million on the tainted blood scandal—has found that high health officials had been shredding documents. The Prime Minister tells high-school students in Brandon, Man., that he often speaks to homeless people, when it turns out no such thing has happened.

Leaping over to our national sport, where we have just won the world junior title for the fifth year in a row, it turns out that the coach of a Swift Current Memorial Cup champion has sexually abused for six years a player—starting at age 14—and no one in the dressing room noticed. And the now-dead boss of the Portland club—while president of the league—was doing the same thing and no one in the hockey hierarchy paid attention to the complaints.

Sheila Copps, who as heritage minister is in charge of the CBC, announces that only 19 jobs have been cut at The Corpse. When queried, she said she had read it somewhere in a piece in *The Ottawa Citizen*, written by a columnist. Conrad Black, the most eloquent master of prose in Canada, in a speech before 2,000 guests at the Toronto Board of Trade annual banquet, said Quebec separatists "cannot suck and blow at the same time."

A Liberal cabinet minister, one Art Eggleton, admits for the first time what two successive Canadian governments have been denying—that under NAFTA there is no provision whatsoever for protection of Canadian cultural foundations such as books and magazines and television and music from American rape.

For the first time in Canadian history, a government has ordered closed a judicial inquiry—this on the Somalia farce. This means our Canadian ambassador to the United Nations, Robert Fowler—longtime Liberal mandarin, former deputy defence minister and brother-in-law to the Governor General—will not have to testify as to testimony that he shredded a key document.

In Regina, 20-year-old Steven Kummerfield, a university basketball star and grandson of a former NDP cabinet minister, is sentenced along with a friend to 6½ years in prison for picking up a single mother of two girls existing as a prostitute, and, after sex, beating her to death. Court evidence shows a buddy who asked him what he had done that night. Reply: "Not much. We drove around, got drunk and killed this chick."

The government of the land, which has now confessed it accused the previous prime minister of the land of being a crook without any evidence, and will now have to pay his $1 million legal costs and millions more for its own, is now enmeshed in an endless trial session—hoping to ride it out before the election—where it will have to pay an estimated $500 million over the Pearson airport contract cancellation because of a prime minister's campaign promise.

In Ontario, the Common Nonsense Revolution regime of Mike Harris has announced that it will—cutting off legislative debate—proceed with the amalgamation of Metropolitan Toronto. And since all relevant six municipalities have announced they will hold referendums to ask taxpayers what they think of the idea, the Queen's Park government has stated it will pay no attention to the results.

In Saskatchewan, home of Tommy Douglas, socialism and church picnics, an entire passel of cabinet ministers and nobodies in the previous Conservative government of Grant Devine have been tossed in the Crowbar Hotel for cookie-jar stealing thought previously to exist only in Louisiana. In Quebec, the relevant cabinet minister has announced that in the event of his government winning a separation referendum that may or may not happen in the sweet by-and-by, a Quebec army will be formed to arm the ramparts against the supposedly nuclear forces of Ottawa.

In Los Angeles, Kim Campbell, holding the plush job of Canadian consul general complete with mansion and swimming pool by the courtesy of the Liberal government, is demanding she appear before the soon-to-be-cancelled Somalia dozer so she can clear her name from suggestions that those military boys beat up on her so she wouldn't be embarrassed while trying for the Tory leadership.

In the country the United Nations says is the best in the world, the inmates are in charge of the asylum.



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